TWO

DISCOURSES ON THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST;

AND ON

THE UNION OF THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN NATURES, IN HIS PERSON.

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

THESE two diſcourſes were compoſed four and thirty years ago, when the *Socinian* hereſy was rampant in this nation. It is not doubted but they will be very uſeful to the plain Chriſtian: for, in the former, the principal arguments for the true and ſupreme Deity of our bleſſed Lord, are handled with a judicious brevity, not always with a view to the *Socinian* error, but oftentimes with areſpect to the *Arian* ſcheme: in the later diſcourſe, the great myſtery of the

the incarnation is treated of, without being clouded, under pretence of its being explained; and laid level with finite capacities. It appears from these discourses, tho short, that the author well understood the matter he engaged in; and there needs no apology to be made for publishing them, because any thing of his, which received his last hand, will meet with approbation, from every judicious reader, who has a concern for the doctrines of uncorrupted Christianity.

A. Taylor.

OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

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OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

JOHN i. 1.

In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

TO know Christ to be the true eternal God, as well as man, is a thing abstruse in it self; but the greater depth and mystery there is in it, the more need we have, to search into it; and the less we understand it, the more reason we have, to get

farther inſtruction about it. I would not be underſtood to preſs any to go about to ſearch into the manner, how Chriſt is one God with the Father, or how he is God and man in one perſon; this would be to preſs perſons to attempt impoſſibilities: all who have had pride and vanity enough, to endeavor to explain the modus of Goſpel myſteries, have ſhew'd their conceited ignorance. We ought not to be ſollicitous about the manner, how Chriſt is the ſame God with the Father, or how he is God and man, in one perſon, becauſe it is not revealed; but we ought to ſearch the ſcriptures, that we may be better eſtabliſhed in the belief of our bleſſed Lord's Divinity, which is the foundation of the whole Goſpel: that ſo we may not be banter'd out of this great article of faith; which is rudely attack'd, in our day, by *Socinians* and others: who, having no ſpiritual diſcerning of Goſpel myſteries, with profane buffoonery endeavor to laugh us out of the belief of the doctrines of Chriſtianity.

The apoſtle *John*, who was the penman of this Goſpel, has principally ſet down thoſe things concerning the Deity, humanity, and miracles of Chriſt, which had been omitted by the other three Evangeliſts. He wrote his goſpel, when he was return'd from his exile in the iſland *Patmos*, after the death of the tyrant and perſecutor *Domitian*, in the

the reign of *Nerva*, or in the beginning of the reign of *Trajan*. Some [a] ſay, that he wrote his Goſpel, at the requeſt of the Chriſtians in *Aſia*, to confute the hereſies of *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*, who deny'd the Godhead of Chriſt.

He has begun his work, with declaring that Chriſt, or the Word, is God. [b] *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* Not the Father, nor the Spirit, but the Word, the Son, was made fleſh. The apoſtle, in calling the ſecond perſon in the Godhead, Λό-

[a] Hanc fidem annuncians Joannes Domini diſcipulus, volens per Evangelii annunciationem auferre eum qui a Cerintho inſeminatus erat hominibus errorem, & multo prius ab his qui dicuntur Nicolaitæ, qui ſunt vulſio ejus, quæ falſo cognominatur ſcientia;—— Sic inchoavit in ea quæ eſt ſecundum evangelium doctrina. *In principio erat Verbum, & Verbum erat apud Deum, & Deus erat Verbum.* Irenæus Lib. III. cap. 11.

Johannes Apoſtolus, ——cum eſſet in Aſia, & jam tunc hæreticorum ſemina pullularent Cerinthi, Ebionis & cæterorum qui negant Chriſtum in carne veniſſe; ——coactus eſt ab omnibus pene tunc Aſiæ epiſcopis,& multarum eccleſiarum legationibus, de Divinitate Salvatoris altius ſcribere.——Cum a fratribus cogeretur ut ſcriberet, ita facturum ſe reſpondiſſe, ſi indicto jejunio in commune omnes Deum deprecarentur: quo expleto revelatione ſaturatus, in illud prooemium e cœlo veniens eructavit: *In Principio erat Verbum, & Verbum erat apud Deum, & Deus erat Verbum.* Hieron. Prolog. Com. in Matth.

Johannes noviſſimus omnium ſcripſit Evangelium, rogatus ab Aſiae Epiſcopis, adverſus Cerinthum alioſque haereticos, & maxime nunc Ebionitarum dogma conſurgens, qui aſſerunt Chriſtum ante Mariam non fuiſſe, unde & compulſus eſt divinam ejus nativitatem edicere. Idem in Catalogo Eccleſiaſtic. ſcript.

[b] Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.

λόγος, the Word, ſeems to have taken this manner of ſpeech from *Onkelos* and *Jonathan*, the authors of the *Chaldee* paraphraſe, on the greateſt part of the old teſtament, who lived ſome time before the coming of Chriſt, and in their tranſlation, often call the Meſſias, the Word of the Lord, [c] Memra Jehovah. The Son of God deſerves this name, becauſe of his office: for as the ſoul, which is inviſible in itſelf, makes known its thoughts by words; ſo God, who is unſearchable and incomprehenſible in his eſſence, has revealed his gracious intentions to us by Chriſt.

The doctrinal propoſition, which I ſhall raiſe from the words, is this;

Jeſus Chriſt is truly God.

When I ſay he is truly God, I mean, that he is God in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, ſupreme God, who has the ſame eſſence with the Father, by his eternal generation. This is what the *Socinians* and *Arians* deny, and ſome *Arminians*, as for inſtance *Epiſcopius* and *Curcellæus*, come too near them, when they ſay, the Son is ſubordinate to the Father in nature.

[c] מימרא יהוה.

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In handling the doctrinal propoſition, I ſhall do two things;

I. I ſhall prove, that Jeſus Chriſt is truly God, or the moſt high God.

II. I ſhall make ſome application.

I. *Jeſus Chriſt proved to be the true God.*

I ſhall endeavour to prove, that Chriſt, who became man, and took upon him a body of fleſh, is the true and the moſt high God: He is ſo, becauſe the ſpecial titles of God are given him; he is one with the Father, and is coequal with him; he is the object of divine adoration; the works of God are aſcribed to him; and the eſſential properties of God are predicated of him.

I. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe the ſpecial titles of God are given him, in ſcripture.

1. Chriſt is called *Jehovah*, which is a title appropriated to God, and is expreſſive of no leſs than a Deity. *Jehovah* יהוה ſignifies one who was, who is, and who ever will be: The name *Jehovah* is given to Chriſt, which proves him to be God, Jer. xxiii. 6. *This is the name whereby he ſhall be called, Jehovah our righteouſneſs,* יהוה צדקנו. The words import thus much, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who came into the world, to juſtify

juſtify ſinners, by ſuffering and dying in their ſtead, is God as well as Man: *Jehovah* ſhews the divinity of his nature, and righteouſneſs denotes his work as mediator. I ſhall add another teſtimony. 1 Cor. x. 9. *Let us not tempt Chriſt, as ſome of them alſo tempted, and were deſtroyed of Serpents.* This is ſpoke of the rebellious murmuring *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs; they are ſaid here to tempt and provoke Chriſt; now if we compare this with the hiſtory of the tranſaction, we ſhall find, that he whom they tempted is called *Jehovah*. Num. xxi. 5, 6, 7. And *the people ſpake againſt God and againſt* Moſes, *and* Jehovah *ſent fiery ſerpents among the people, therefore the people came to* Moſes, *and ſaid, we have ſinned, for we have ſpoke againſt* Jehovah, *and againſt thee.* He who in one place is called Chriſt, in another is called *Jehovah*, which is the proper name of God, and a name that was never given to a creature, but is reſerved as a peculiar denomination for the creator of the world. This proves the Godhead of Chriſt, for as the name *Jehovah* is common to him with the Father, ſo they both participate, equally in what the name ſignifies.

2. Chriſt is called *Lord*. Pſal. cx. 1. *The Lord ſaid to my Lord, ſit thou at my right hand, 'till I make thine enemies thy footſtool.* God the Father is here brought in, covenanting with his Son, promiſing him to exalt him

him upon a throne, and to ſubdue all his enemies under his feet, upon condition that he would aſſume the human nature, for the redemption of ſinners. Chriſt apply'd the words of the royal prophet to himſelf, and urged them, to prove that he was more than a mere man. Mat. xxii. 42, 43, 44, 45. *Jeſus asked them, ſaying, what think you of Chriſt? whoſe Son is he? they ſay unto him, the Son of* David. *He ſaith unto them, how then doth* David *in ſpirit call him Lord? ſaying, the Lord ſaid to my Lord, ſit thou at my right hand, 'till I make thine enemies thy footſtool. If* David *then call him Lord, how is he his Son?* By this queſtion Chriſt ſtopped the mouths of the perverſe *Phariſees*, and proved that he exiſted as God, and had a being as Lord before all time. Whatever falſe and ſtrained gloſſes the latter *Jewiſh* Rabbins put upon *David*'s words, yet we may obſerve, when Chriſt was in the fleſh, they were generally interpreted in a right ſenſe, and underſtood as part of a diſcourſe between two equals, God the Father and the Meſſias: had it not been ſo, can we think the *Jews*, to whom Chriſt ſpoke, would have been ſilent, and not ready to reply, this was not the meaning and intent of *David?* ſurely they would, becauſe, by reaſon of the inveterate rancor and hatred they bore Chriſt, they were moſt nduſtrious, to catch at all advantages againſt

him. Chriſt was *David*'s Son, according to the fleſh, but he was his ſupreme Lord, as he was God.

3. Chriſt is called God, not ambiguouſly, metaphorically, or by way of analogy, but ſtrictly and properly. When the good angels, or men are called gods, it is improperly, and to ſignifie the reſemblance they have to God, or the relation they bear to him, by their office or place. Magiſtrates are called gods, becauſe they are ſet up and appointed by God, to puniſh vice and wickedneſs; but Chriſt is called God in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, even where there is a diſtinction made between his divine and human nature. Rom. ix. 5. *Of whom according to the fleſh Chriſt came, who is over all; God bleſſed for ever, Amen.*[a] The words cannot refer to God the Father, by way of doxology, as the Socinians would have it, for neither the matter, nor the ſeries of the words will admit it; it is Chriſt that is ſpoke of, and not God the Father; and the limitation, κατὰ σάρκα, neceſſitates us to underſtand the words of Chriſt: he who came of the fathers, according to the fleſh, is over all, and is God bleſſed for ever. The Apoſtle here diſtinguiſhed the humanity of Chriſt from his God-

[a] Ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς, τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν.

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head; he has told us, that, as he was man, he deſcended from the *Jews*, and then he immediately ſubjoin'd, that this very Chriſt is exalted over all, and is to be bleſſed for ever, becauſe he is God; he has ſet the ſeal of his own approbation to this great truth, *Amen*, ſo be it; he was pleaſed and rejoyced that it was ſo, he would not let it go without a ſpecial remark, and commended it to others, as neceſſary to be conſidered and believed by them.

II. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is one with God the Father, and is coequal with him.

1. Chriſt is one with God the Father, or he has the ſame eſſence with him. John x. 30. *I and my Father are one* [b]. This is not to be reſtrained to oneneſs of conſent, becauſe from the unity of Power, which Chriſt had with God, he proved the unity he had with him, in his eſſence. ver. 28, 29. *I give to them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh; neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand: my Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* Beſides, what moſt offended the *Jews*, was not oneneſs of conſent, but oneneſs of eſſence which Chriſt ſaid he had with the Father: It was for this they endeavoured to ſtone

[b] Ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ Πατὴρ ἓν ἐσμεν.

him, ver. 33. *For a good work*, (ſaid they) *we ſtone thee not; but for blaſphemy; and becauſe that thou, being a Man, makeſt thy ſelf God.* When they brought this charge againſt Chriſt, he did not call back his words; but confirmed what he had ſaid, by arguing from the leſs to the greater. ver. 34--38. *Is it not written* (ſaith Chriſt) *in your law, I ſaid, ye are gods? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the ſcripture cannot be broken; ſay you of him, whom the Father hath ſanctified, and ſent into the world, Thou blaſphemeſt; becauſe I ſaid I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.* It is as if Chriſt had ſaid thus; if magiſtrates be called gods, for the temporal authority which is given them, then ought not he much more be called ſo, whom the Father has ſanctified, and ſent into the world, to do the work of a Mediator; which requires the power of a God?

2. Chriſt is coequal with God the Father. John v. 17, 18. *Jeſus anſwered them, my Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the* Jews *ſought the more to kill him, becauſe he not only had broke the ſabbath, but ſaid alſo, that God was his Father, making himſelf equal with God.* Chriſt declared, that he was equal with God in power, and

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in this ſenſe the *Jews* underſtood him, and therefore they went about to kill him, becauſe they thought he blaſphemed, when he made himſelf equal with God: This was the inference they drew, and Chriſt was ſo far from denying it, that he proved it by three arguments; as for inſtance: He did the ſame works with God, ver. 19. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, verily, verily, I ſay to you, The Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do; for what things ſoever he does, theſe alſo does the Son likewiſe.* If it be objected, that Chriſt ſays he could do nothing of himſelf; it may be anſwered, that this argues no inequality of power, but only notes the order of working among the perſons in the Trinity, which follows the order of ſubſiſting. Chriſt had alſo a right to the ſame worſhip with God. Ver. 23. *That all men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father: He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which ſent him.* In ſhort, Chriſt had the ſame life with God the Father. Ver. 26. *As the Father hath life in himſelf; ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf.*

Chriſt equally partakes of every excellence and perfection, with God the Father John xvi. 15. *All things* (ſaith Chriſt) *that the Father has are mine.* There is not any thing in the one, which is not as fully in the

other. Equality with the firſt perſon in the Godhead is Chriſt's right and due. Phil. ii. 6, 7. *Chriſt Jeſus being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; nevertheleſs, he made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant* [a]. The form of God is the nature, glory, and majeſty of the Godhead, which ſhined in Chriſt before the foundation of the world: The form of God muſt be underſtood of the nature of God; as the form of a ſervant muſt be meant of the human nature, in a low, depreſſed ſtate, ſo the form of God is put for the divine eſſence, and the glory belonging to it. Chriſt was in the form of God, before he was in the form of a ſervant; he was God, before he was man. He judged it no robbery, to be God's equal, becauſe it was his propriety, and what flowed to him from eternal generation; had it not been his right, it would have been the greateſt rebellion in him againſt God, to take it to himſelf. It is the higheſt blaſphemy for a creature to equal himſelf with God, and it is what robs him of his crown and dignity, which is a ſin that he never will let go unpuniſhed. Iſa. xlii. 8. *I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.* His glory he will

[a] Ὃς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλ' ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών.

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keep to himſelf, and he will pour out his indignation upon every one that preſumes to ſhare in it. If Chriſt had not been God, it would have been ſacrilege, uſurpation, and injuſtice in him, to make himſelf equal with the Father; and God, who is a jealous God, would not have ſuffer'd him to encroach on his honour and prerogative, without feeling the effects of his diſpleaſure. When Chriſt is ſaid to be equal with the Father, this proves him to be God, and that he is as glorious and wiſe, as great and powerful, as holy and good as the Father is, and that he is not inferior to him in any thing, which properly and ſtrictly belongs to God.

III. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is the object of divine adoration. The argument may run thus; He who is, and ought to be the object of divine adoration is God; but Chriſt is the object of divine adoration; therefore he is God. None can juſtly queſtion the truth of the firſt propoſition, and the ſecond is not without proof: Chriſt is the object of divine adoration, for he received divine worſhip, when it was offered him. Matt. viii. 2. *There came a leper and worſhipped him.* He would have rejected the adoration of this leper, had it not been the duty of the creature to give it, and his right to receive it: The very angels are commanded to worſhip him.

him. Heb. i. 6. *Let all the angels of God worſhip him.* All believers are brought in worſhipping him. Rev. iv. 8—14. *The four living creatures, and four and twenty elders fell down before the lamb, having every one of them harps; and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the ſaints; and they ſung a new ſong, ſaying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof; for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt made us to our God kings and prieſts, and we ſhall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands; ſaying with a loud voice; Worthy is the Lamb, that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. And every creature, which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and ſuch as are in the ſea, and all that are in them, heard I, ſaying, bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be to him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four living creatures ſaid, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down, and worſhipped him that liveth for ever and ever.* We have here a lively

lively and very elegant repreſentation of the true Chriſt, in all ages, and a revelation, not only of what they do, but of what they are bound *de jure*, and in the way of their duty, to do: If Chriſt were not the true God, it would be blaſphemy in him, to receive worſhip, and it would be idolatry in us to give it him; becauſe to worſhip a mere creature, tho' ever ſo much dignified, is flat idolatry. The ancient writers of the Chriſtian church had reaſon and truth on their ſide, when they cenſured the *Arians* as idolaters, becauſe they denied Chriſt to be God, and yet worſhiped him.

IV. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe the works of God are aſcribed to him. Works that call for almighty power, and can be done by none but God, are done by Chriſt. I ſhall inſtance in the works of creation, conſervation and reſurrection.

1. Creation, which is the bringing ſomething out of pure nothing, is the work of Chriſt. John i. 3. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* The creation of all things is attributed to Chriſt affirmatively, and negatively; it is attributed to him affirmatively, *all things were made by him*; if all things were made by him, what may be drawn from hence is this; he can be no creature, and if he be no creature, he is eternal, and if he be eternal, he is God: The creation of all

things is alſo attributed to Chriſt negatively; *Without him was not any thing made, that was made*; (οὐδὲ ἓν, *not one thing made, that was made*;) how could the Evangeliſt word it more ſignificantly? If not one thing was made without him, then he made the firſt matter, and ſo brought the beautiful fabric of the world out of nothing. When it is ſaid, *All things were made by him*, it notes not inſtrumentality, but prime agency and efficience, as the propoſition muſt be underſtood, in other places of ſcripture. 1 Cor. i. 9. *God is faithful, by whom you were called.* Will any ſay, that God is only the inſtrument, and not the primary active cauſe of our vocation? 1 Theſ. iv. 2. *You know what commandments we gave you, by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Was Chriſt no more than the inſtrument, and not the Lord of the commandments? 2 Tim. i. 14. *That good thing which was committed to thee, keep by the holy Ghoſt.* Is not the holy Ghoſt the cauſe of enlivening grace, and of preſerving gifts in us? In the creation Chriſt did not act by a derivative power, but he put forth as much power from himſelf, as God the Father did. God the Father created all things by the immediate operation of the Son, in the unity of eſſence, power, wiſdom, and goodneſs: There was no inferiority or ſuperiority between the Father and the Son, in the work of creation

tion, but they were equal. All things, from the higheſt angel to the loweſt worm, were created by Chriſt. Col. i. 16. *By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt.* This muſt be underſtood of the creation of the univerſe, and not of the renovation of ſinners, as the *Socinians* wreſt it; becauſe Chriſt is not only ſaid to be creator of things on earth, that wanted redemption, but of things in heaven, that needed no reſtoration; beſides it cannot be meant of the new creation, becauſe none will ſay that the devils are created again by him.

2. The conſervation of all things is the work of Chriſt: He keeps the creatures from ſinking into nothing, out of which he brought them, and he fixes them in their proper centers. Iſa. xli. 4. *Who has wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord the firſt, and with the laſt, I am he.* By one continued voice he calls all generations, from the beginning to the end of the world. Col. i. 17. *He is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt.* He keeps the axle-tree of the creation from cracking and breaking in pieces,

and knits all things together, which otherwiſe would inevitably tumble into a chaos of confuſion.

3. The reſurrection of dead creatures is the work of Chriſt. Chriſt raiſes up and gives life to dead ſouls. John v. 25. *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of man, and they that hear ſhall live.* It is eaſy to imagine, what a vaſt power is neceſſary, to roll away the ſtone, which lies on the grave's mouth of a dead ſoul, to ſcatter the darkneſs of the mind which is as black as hell, to ſoften the heart which is harder than ſteel or the adamant, to incline the reſiſting will which is made up of deviliſh enmity and malignity, and to purifie the affections which are ſtrongly faſtened, and cloſely glued to luſt: Who can do this but he that has the power of God? [a] As Chriſt quickens dead ſouls, ſo he raiſes up dead bodies to life. John v. 28, 29. *The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come forth, they that have done good to the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the reſurrection of damnation.* Chriſt will change the vileneſs of earthly bodies, into the glory of heavenly bodies, and will make them fit receptacles for bright ſpirits.

[a] Θεῖον ἐςὶ παθὸν τῆς ψυχῆς.

Phil

Phil. iii. 21. *He ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able, even to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* He will ſpeak dead bodies into a reſtored life, out of the inſenſible duſt, that ſo his ſaints may in body as well as in ſpirit be for ever with the Lord.

Chriſt made the world, he preſerves all the creatures, and he gives life to the dead, and therefore we muſt acknowledge him to be God.

V. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe the eſſential properties of God are predicated of him, ſuch as omniſcience, omnipreſence, omnipotence, infinite wiſdom, immutability, and eternity.

1. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is omniſcient; he knows all things.

(1.) Chriſt has a perfect knowledge of God the Father. Angels and men know God in part, but Chriſt only fully knows the Father. Matt. xi. 27. *No man knows the Son, but the Father, neither knows any man the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.* God is far above the reach and capacity of every creature, and no finite being can comprehend him, becauſe he is infinite; but Chriſt comprehends God the Father, and knows him as much as he is to be known, or as perfectly as the Father knows himſelf: His

knowledge of the Father is not by ratiocination, or a train of conſequences, but by immediate intuition, or a comprehenſive viſion.

(2.) Chriſt knows all God's works: His knowledge extends to all the acts of God's power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, either in the works of creation or providence. As the Father knows all things, whereof he is the cauſe, ſo the Son knows all things, whereof he is the worker: The creation of all things belongs to both, and the perfect knowledge of all things muſt belong to both; becauſe it is much more difficult to create things, than to know them when they are created. I am very ſenſible, it may here be objected; that Chriſt himſelf confeſſed he was ignorant of the day of judgment, Mark xiii. 32. *Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, not the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father:* If Chriſt knew not when the day of judgment would be, how can he be ſaid to know all things? To this I anſwer; Chriſt ſpoke not this of himſelf, as he was the Son of God, for as he was God, he knew every thing, and nothing could be hid from him; but he ſpoke this of himſelf, as he was the Son of man, and as he was reputed and thought to be, by them with whom he now converſed; and who asked him queſtions.

(3.) Chriſt

(3.) Chriſt knows all the thoughts and inclinations of men's hearts. He knew the hearts of them that died, before he came into the world; becauſe he muſt be their judge: It would be impoſſible for him to judge right, unleſs he knew the merits of them, of whom he muſt be judge; and he could not know the deſerts of men, if any of their thoughts were hid from him. Chriſt knows the moſt ſudden thoughts, that can ſpring up in the hearts of men. Matt. ix. 3, 4. *Certain of the ſcribes ſaid within themſelves, this Man blaſphemeth: And Jeſus knowing their thoughts, ſaid, wherefore think you evil in your hearts?* He knows the hearts of men by inſpection. John ii. 23, 24, 25. *Many believed in his name, when they ſaw the miracles which he did; but Jeſus did not commit himſelf unto them, becauſe he knew all men; and needed not that any ſhould teſtify of man, for he knew what was in man.* He looked into their hearts, and ſaw what habitual treachery, variableneſs, fickleneſs, and inconſtancy lurked there; he knew their inſide better than others did their outſide: No covering can be ſo thick, as to bound his eye, and no pretence can be ſo glittering, as to impoſe upon his underſtanding: When he converſed among men, he knew the moſt ſecret whiſperings of his unbelieving followers, as well as of his open ene-

enemies. John vi. 61. *When Jeſus knew in himſelf, that his diſciples murmured at it, he ſaid to them; doth this offend you?* He neither heard their voice, nor received information from others, and yet he knew they murmured, and were offended. *Peter* was convinced of this truth, when he appealed to Chriſt concerning the ſincerity of his heart. John xxi. 17. *Peter ſaid to him, Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee.*

(4.) Chriſt knows what will be the thoughts, purpoſes, and reſolutions of men, long before they enter into their hearts: He diſcerned the treaſon of *Judas* in its root, as it lay hid in the rubbiſh of his natural corruption, and he knew he would betray him, before ever *Judas* himſelf once thought, or intended to do it: He ſaw beforehand *Peter*'s apoſtaſy, and told him of it; *Peter* promiſed the contrary, and ſtiffly reſolved againſt it; but our Saviour's prediction was verified, and *Peter*'s bold and valiant reſolution languiſhed into cowardice: The moſt concealed operations of the mind, which lie cloſeted and lock'd up from view of the world, are bare and naked before him. To ſearch the heart, is a work that Chriſt aſcribes to himſelf with no ſmall emphaſis. Revel. ii. 23. *All the churches ſhall know,* (ſaith Chriſt) *that I am he, which ſearches the reins and the heart.*

heart. All this ſtrenuouſly proves Chriſt to be the moſt high God; for to ſearch the heart, is God's peculiar work. 1 Kings viii. 39. *Give to every man according to his ways, whoſe heart thou knoweſt, for thou, even thou only knoweſt the hearts of all the children of men.* The reaſon why none can ſearch the heart but God, is, becauſe he made it, and he only is every where preſent.

2. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is omnipreſent; he is preſent every where. The ubiquity of Chriſt proves him to be God: He has promiſed the preſence of his divine nature to the members of his myſtical body, when they are fartheſt aſunder, and are ſcattered from one end of the earth to another: Where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is preſent with them, and is in the midſt of them. Mat. xviii. 20. *Where two or three,* (ſaith Chriſt) *are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them.* If we underſtand it of the preſence of Chriſt's Spirit, it doth not weaken, but rather corroborates, the aſſertion of the ubiquity of his eſſential preſence, becauſe it muſt be granted that he is as great as the Spirit, which he ſends. Chriſt is ſaid, both to come down from heaven, and to remain in heaven. John iii. 13. *None has aſcended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

He came down from heaven in his incarnation, but he ſtayed there in his Godhead. Every creature is either bounded by a phyſical ſpace, as a body, or is determined to be in one place, and not in another at the ſame time, as a ſpirit; but Chriſt is ſo on earth, that, at the ſame moment of time, he is alſo in heaven: He is ſaid to fill all things. Epheſ. iv. 10. *He that deſcended, is the ſame alſo that aſcended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.* This could never be, if he were not omnipreſent, and becauſe he is preſent every where, he muſt be the moſt high God.

3. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is omnipotent, or he is Almighty in power. It is ſaid of him that he has power over all fleſh, to give eternal life to as many as are given him of the Father. John xvii. 2. *Thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life to as many as thou haſt given him.* Power over all fleſh, muſt be a power which extends itſelf to the moſt retired thoughts, and inward motions of men, and cannot be managed by a finite arm, or a created underſtanding: Eternal life is everlaſting happineſs, which can neither be given nor ſecured, but by almighty power: To have power over all fleſh, and to give eternal life to as many as believe, are things which beſpeak the almighty power of Chriſt, and can never be done by a creature,

ture, or a dependent being. As Chriſt is called Alpha and Omega, or the firſt and the laſt, becauſe in him there is a priority and perfection, with reſpect to all creatures; ſo he is ſaid to be the Almighty. Revel. i. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*[a]. This is not applicable to any in this place, but to Chriſt, becauſe he had been ſpoke of in the words immediately preceding; he ſpoke it of himſelf, and he afterwards ſaid, that he was once dead, but was now alive, ver. 17, 18. *I am the firſt and the laſt: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and I have the keys of hell and death.* If Chriſt be almighty, he muſt be the moſt high God.

4. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is infinite in wiſdom. He muſt be infinitely wiſe, becauſe God the Father has truſted him with the management of all things. John v. 22. *The Father judges none, but has committed all judgment to the Son; that all ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* If Chriſt were a creature, or any way dependent on the Father for his being, he could not be a fit perſon for ſuch a great truſt, becauſe a creature, or

[a] Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α, καὶ τὸ Ω, ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, λέγει ὁ Κύριος, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ.

a derived being cannot know all things, and ſo may miſcarry in many things. God would never have put the government of angels and men into the hands of Chriſt, if he had not infinite wiſdom to diſpoſe and order things, for the beſt and nobleſt ends. The government of the world being committed to Chriſt, ſhews the infiniteneſs of his wiſdom; but were he ſubordinate, or only a creature, infinite wiſdom would be incompatible with him, becauſe it is the inſeparable property of God.

5. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is immutable. Chriſt's immutability is a proof of his true Godhead. Pſalm cii. 24——27. *O my God — thy years are throughout all generations,* [b] *of old thou haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they ſhall periſh but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old as a garment; as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed: But thou art the ſame, and thy years ſhall have no end.* [c] This is applied to Chriſt by the apoſtle *Paul*, Heb. i. 8, 10---12. *To the Son he ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, &c. (from Pſalm clv. 6.) —*And thou, Lord, in the be-*

[b] ברור דורים שנותיך, thus rendred in the Greek verſion, ἐν γενεᾷ γενεῶν τὰ ἔτη σε.

[c] ואתה הוא ושנותיך לא יתמו.

ginning,

ginning, haſt laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands: They ſhall periſh, but thou remaineſt [d]; *and they ſhall wax old as a garment, and as a veſture ſhalt thou fold them up, and they ſhall be changed; but thou art the ſame, and thy years ſhall not fail* [e]. Chriſt will be the ſame, when all the empires of the world will ſlide away, and when a period will be put to all the changes of the creation: As there was no change made in his being, in the creation of all things, ſo there will be no change made in him by their final alteration; he will ſee them end, as he ſaw them riſe up out of nothing into being and order; he will continue to be the ſame after their expiration, as he was before their original.

6. Chriſt is the moſt high God, becauſe he is eternal. Heb. xiii. 8. *Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever* [f]. He is no more to day than he was yeſterday, and he will be no more to morrow than he is to day,

(1.) Chriſt ſubſiſted before all the works of creation. *Solomon* gives a large as well as a moſt ſublime deſcription of his eternity. Prov. viii. 22---31. JEHOVAH *poſ-*

[d] Σὺ διαμένεις.

[e] Σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ, καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσιν, it is likewiſe rendred thus, in the Greek tranſlation of the old teſtament.

[f] Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς χθὲς καὶ σήμερον ὁ αὐτὸς, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

ſeſſed

ſeſſed me [g] *in the beginning of his ways before his works of old: I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning or ever the earth was: When there were no depths, I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water: Before the mountains were ſettled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the higheſt parts of the duſt of the world: When he prepared the heavens I was there; when he ſet a compaſs on the face of the depth: When he eſtabliſhed the clouds above; when he ſtrengthened the foundations of the deep: When he gave to the ſea his decree, that the waters ſhould not paſs his commandment; when he eſtabliſhed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men.* Chriſt is brought in, by the wiſe man, ſpeaking, under the notion of the uncreated wiſdom of God. He is ſaid to exiſt before any thing of God's works, to concur with him in every thing he did, to be always with him, and to rejoice before him: What can be

[g] יהוה קנני, which is moſt falſely rendred, Κύριος ἔκτισέ με, in the Greek tranſlation, (if that verſion be not corrupted, as it is moſt likely) when it ſhould have been tranſlated ἐκτήσατο.

more

more full and clear to prove the eternity of his being? The ſame thing is urged by the apoſtle *John*, to prove the Divinity of Chriſt. John i. 1, 2, 3. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: The ſame was in the beginning with God: All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.*

(2.) Chriſt was in heaven before his incarnation. John vi. 62. *What and if you ſhall ſee the Son of man aſcend up, where he was before.* If Chriſt was before in heaven, it could not be in his fleſh; becauſe he took that of the virgin, and he could not be exiſtent in it, before he had it; it muſt then be another nature; the nature of man it was not, for that he did not aſſume till his conception and birth; the nature of angels it could not be, for that he never took; it muſt then be the divine nature, wherein he ſubſiſted, and was in heaven, before he took a body of fleſh, and came down to the earth. John viii. 58. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, verily, verily, I ſay to you, before Abraham was, I am* [h]. Chriſt did not ſpeak this of his manhood; for if he had, every *Jew* that was forty years old then preſent, would have been able to have accuſed him of the greateſt falſhood: The

[h] Πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγώ εἰμι.

Jews

Jews knew when he was born; or, ſuppoſing they had been ignorant of his age, there was a way for them ſoon to find it out, which was to have recourſe to the publick regiſters or ceſs tables, and there they might ſee when *Joſeph* and *Mary* were taxed by *Auguſtus Ceſar*, and conſequently how old Chriſt was. How was it then that Chriſt was before *Abraham?* It was as he was the God and maker of *Abraham.*

(3.) The Generation of Chriſt is eternal. The prophet *Micha* has join'd his eternity and his humanity together, and in the ſame words has ſpoke of him, as he is Man, and as he is eternal. Mic. v. 2. *Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, art thou little among the thouſands of Judah? out of thee ſhall he come forth to me, that is to be ruler in Iſrael; whoſe goings forth have been from of old, from everlaſting, or, from the days of eternity* [i]. There are two ways of going forth aſcribed to Chriſt; he is ſaid to come out of *Bethlehem Ephratah*, this was within the ſpan of time, and this he did as he was man; his outgoings are ſaid to be from of old, or from the days of eternity; this muſt be before ever time commenced, and this he could not have done, had he not been the eternal God. The prophet ſpoke

[i] מוצאתיו מקדם מימי עולם, which is thus rendred in the *Greek* verſion, ἐξοδοι αὐτῦ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἐξ ἡμερῶν αἰῶνος.

of the incarnation of Chriſt, in conjunction with his eternal generation: he has told us, that, he was to come out of *Bethlehem*, to be born of a virgin, and to be lineally deſcended from *David*; and in the ſame breath he has affirm'd, that his outgoings are from everlaſting: This would be irreconcileable and highly contradictory, unleſs we grant that Chriſt was born of a woman, as he was man, but was before all worlds, and from everlaſting, as he is God: This is the drift of the prophet, and to ſay the contrary, is to make his words no better than unintelligible nonſenſe, and the latter part of the verſe inconſiſtent with the former part.

(4.) The glory of Chriſt is eternal. Chriſt in his prayer to the Father, deſired to be reinveſted with that glory, which was his own, before the world began. John xvii. 5. *Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.* This whole chapter is the very heart of Chriſt mediator poured out to the Father, in floods of love, and in ſtreams of affections for poor ſinners: it was the greateſt prayer that ever was made, or put up here on earth, and it may with great reaſon be call'd a ſpecimen of the rhetoric our Lord uſes, in his preſent interceſſion in heaven for us.

Before I come to enforce the argument, which lies in the words, I ſhall endeavour to remove the ſtumbling block, which the *Socinians* and *Arians* endeavor to caſt in our way, by perverting the third verſe. *That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* They ſay, Chriſt is excluded from being God, becauſe the Father is called the only true God: But this is falſe, for μόνον only, does not exclude the Son, or the Spirit from being God, but only idols and feign'd divinities: It is put to diſtinguiſh the true God, from the gentile Gods, and it excludes none that are of the ſame eſſence, but all that are not. Beſides did the word only exclude the Son from being God, it would follow with the ſame force, that where the Son is call'd God only, the Father would be excluded from being God. Iſa. xlv. 20, 21, 22. *I am JEHOVAH, there is no God beſides me, a juſt God, and a Savior there is none beſides me. Look to me and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and none elſe. I have ſworn by my ſelf, the word is gone out of my mouth, in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that to me every knee ſhall bow, and every tongue ſhall ſwear.* The perſon here ſpeaking, has told us three times in two verſes, that he is God alone; now if we look into the new teſtament, we ſhall find this apply'd to Chriſt, by the apoſtle *Paul,*

Paul, who is the beſt interpreter, and brought to prove, that he will judge the world. Rom. xiv. 10, 11. *We ſhall all ſtand before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt; for it is written, as I live ſaith the Lord, every knee ſhall bow to me, and every tongue ſhall confeſs to God.*

Having thus given the true ſenſe of the third verſe, I ſhall now conſider what there is in the fifth verſe, to corroborate the truth of Chriſt's eternal Godhead: and there are three things remarkable, as to the glory Chriſt pray'd for.

(1.) He pray'd to be glorified with the Father himſelf; *Glorify thou me with thine own ſelf.* The eternal communion between God and Chriſt is unſpeakably cloſer than the converſe of the ſoul with its own thoughts. As the Father is the joy of the Son, ſo the Son is the joy of the Father. Chriſt knew the ſweetneſs of that ineffable delight, which came to him by his abode with the Father; therefore as ſoon as the appointed time was come, he deſired, that as mediator he might be admitted into that ſolace and fulneſs of joy, which, as God, he had with the Father from everlaſting.

(2.) Chriſt's requeſt was no novel claim, but a petition of right. He ask'd what was his own, and in his tenure and poſſeſſion, before all time: He pray'd not for any favour, or free gift; for as he needed

no mercy, ſo he never asked nor received any; but he deſired what was his peculiar right, before the ſun, moon, or ſtars were made. His demand was, that the glory of his Godhead might in ſome meaſure be made viſible, in the human nature, which he had aſſumed.

(3.) Here is a full proof in as plain words as can be uttered, of the eternity of Chriſt's glory; he pleaded for the reſtoration of the manifeſtation of that glory, which he had before the world was; this proves the eternity of his perſon two ways.

[1.] If his glory be eternal, his perſon muſt be ſo likewiſe; for how can his glory be ſeparate from himſelf? accidental changes and ſeparable acceſſions have no place in God; whatſoever is in him, can be nothing but himſelf. It is a contradiction in terms, and great folly, to ſay, the glory of Chriſt is from everlaſting, and yet to deny the eternity of his perſon. Chriſt did not ſpeak here of his manhood, for that was conceived in the womb of the virgin, ſome thouſands of years after the creation, and no glory could belong to a non-entity. It would be abſurd to ſay, ſuch and ſuch things are broad or large, good or evil, when indeed there are no ſuch things in being. Chriſt is ſaid to have a glory before the world was, and this is a proof of the eternal Godhead.

[2.] The

[2.] The literal expreſſions muſt be underſtood of Chriſt's Godhead, elſe they can have no true meaning at all. Chriſt appropriated to himſelf a glory before the world was made; all things are comprehended in eternity and time, the latter is ſwallowed up in the former: All things, which are exiſtent, muſt have their being in the one or the other. The ſouls of men are made in time, and muſt endure for ever; but what has a being out of time, muſt be eternal in its ſubſtance, becauſe there is no middle ſpace between time and eternity. Before the firſt creature was made, there was nothing but pure eternity itſelf. When Chriſt is ſaid to have a glory before the world was, how can any thinking man imagine it to be any other, than a glory without a beginning? There is nothing but time to begin things in, and if we go one ſtep beyond that, there is nothing but eternity itſelf to fix upon.

The *Socinians* ſay, Chriſt only had this glory by the pre-ordination of God; but nothing can be more frivolous than this; for Chriſt does not ſpeak of a glory he was to have, but of the glory which he had; or of a perſonal glory, of which he had poſſeſſion from eternity. *Paul* and all other believers were choſe by God from everlaſting, and conſequently fore-ordain'd to juſtification, adoption, regeneration, ſanc-

ſanctification, and ſalvation; but it would be ridiculouſly contrary to all ſenſe and reaſon, to ſay, that *Paul* was ſaved or glorified before he was born, or that he was regenerate, when he had nothing of the new nature in him, or that he had faith, when he was in his unbelief, or that he had a love to Chriſt, when he was a hater of his name, and a perſecutor of his church.

When Chriſt is ſaid to have a glory with the Father before the world was, it proves, that he was actually poſſeſs'd of it, before all time. Chriſt's requeſt was, that the glory which he had by his eternal generation, might be no longer clouded nor obſcured, but manifeſted to angels and men. His words ſignify as much, as if he had ſaid: Holy Father, when I am ſlain, and lie in the grave as one in diſhonour; do thou raiſe up my body again, that men may know and believe, that I have always been conſubſtantial and coeternal with thy ſelf, and equally participating with thee, in all thy glorious attributes, before ever my human nature had a being. Upon the whole, it ſufficiently appears, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is eternal, and from hence we may ſafely conclude, that he is God.

This I have proved, that Chriſt is truly God. The ſpecial titles of God are given him; he is one with God, and coequal with him; he is the object of divine adoration; the

the works of God are aſcribed to him; the properties, which are eſſential to God, and incommunicable to creatures, are predicated of him; he is ſaid to be omniſcient, or to know all things, to be every where preſent, to be almighty in power, to be infinite in wiſdom, to be unchangeable, and to be eternal; and becauſe he is ſo, he muſt be the true and the moſt high God.

II. *The Application.*

Having proved the true Deity of our bleſſed Lord from ſcripture, I ſhall now make ſome application.

I. If Jeſus Chriſt be the true and moſt high God, let us watch againſt all infection, which may come from the errors of the *Socinians* and *Arians*, who deny Chriſt to be true God, or God in a ſtrict and proper ſenſe, and ſay he is no more than a man, or at beſt a dignified creature.

The *Socinians* ſay, Chriſt had no exiſtence before he was born of the virgin. Theſe hereticks, whoſe blaſphemy with open mouth rages amongſt us, in denying Chriſt to be the Son of God in ſuch a ſenſe, as to have the ſame eſſence with God, and to ſubſiſt perſonally from eternity, are diſciples, that far outdo their maſter the devil, in frontleſs confidence; they may truly

ly be ſaid to be more immodeſtly heretical, than the devil himſelf, whom they have for their tutor.

As the *Jews* underſtood without any difficulty, that Chriſt declared himſelf to be God, when he called himſelf the Son of God; ſo the devil had not the impudence, to deny Chriſt to be the eternal Son of God, which the miſerable followers of *Socinus* ſtick not to do. The devil, indeed, tempted Chriſt to doubt of his being the Son of God. Matth. vi. 6. *If thou be the Son of God, caſt thy ſelf down.* The devil endeavour'd to bring Chriſt to doubt of his eternal Sonſhip; but he himſelf, after he had ſeen the miraculous works of Chriſt, could not deny it, but bore witneſs to it, tho' with no good deſign. Mat. viii. 29. *Jeſus, thou Son of God, art thou come hither, to torment us before the time?* Mark v. 7. *Jeſus, thou Son of the moſt high God.*

May we not hope, that the time wherein the power of darkneſs exalts itſelf, ſhall not be long, but ſhall come to its wiſh'd for period? becauſe the miſſionaries of hell ſcruple not to deny Chriſt to be the eternal Son of God, which the devil durſt not openly deny, when Chriſt was upon the earth.

Some perceive *Socinianiſm* to be ſo groſs, that it is indefenſible, and therefore they revive *Arianiſm*, as what is more plauſible, and grant, that Chriſt was before all other

creatures, yet they ſay he is no more than a creature, tho' he be chief, and the firſt of all created beings. The *Socinians* and *Arians* differ in ſome things, yet they agree in denying Chriſt to be truly God. That Chriſt is the Son of God, having the ſame nature with him, and was begotten from everlaſting, is the very foundation of all Chriſtianity. If this article of our belief be given up, we are reduced to a level with Mahometaniſm, and have nothing left us but a new model of Heatheniſm, which inſtead of recommending a number of inferior deities to us, leaves us to take up with one only. The error of denying Chriſt to be God is a pertinence that walks in darkneſs, and it carries a mortal contagion, into the places into which it ſlides unperceived.

1. I ſhall ſhew, what are ſome of the cauſes of this increaſing plague or growing error, of denying Chriſt's true Divinity, that we may be warned of them, and guarded againſt them. When many are drawn to embrace the error of ſuch, and deny Chriſt to be the true God, it may be ſaid to be from the following cauſes.

(1.) It is from the pride of mens ſpirits, who advance the corrupt dictates of their own darken'd reaſon, above the revelation of God's word. When perſons make their own reaſon, and not divine revelation, their

guide about goſpel myſteries, they will ſoon run into the greateſt errors, and the wildeſt fancies.

(2.) It is from the vitiated and depraved conſtitution of mens ſouls: Their underſtandings are naturally full of ignorance and darkneſs, and their wills are full of enmity againſt the truth. They are not more incapable to judge what is truth, than they are averſe to receive what is ſo, and inclinable to embrace error.

(3.) It is from the inconſtancy of men, in reſpect of truth, and their itch and impetuous deſire after novelty, or what ſeems to be ſo. They do not reliſh plain ſcripture truths, and the inculcation of them does not refreſh them, but grows nauſeous to them. It is the weakneſs of their judgments, and the wickedneſs of their hearts, that makes them ready to be carried about with every wind of doctrine, and to be perverted by crafty ſeducers.

(4.) It is from the power of Satan, working in men; the devil is the promoter of every error, and the enemy of every truth; but there is no truth that he more militates againſt, than the Godhead of Chriſt: and therefore he endeavours, with the greateſt force, to ſhake our faith about the truth. His ſpite is ſo great, againſt our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe he paſſed by the fallen angels, and undertook the reſtoration of fallen man,

man, that he ſtrives to bring ſinners to deny him to be God. He is pleaſed, when they do this, becauſe it is Chriſt's diſhonour, and their own loſs: He will give them leave to ſpeak reverently of God, and even to plead for natural religion, if at the ſame time he can but get them to blaſpheme Chriſt, and to caſt contempt on the Goſpel.

(5.) It is a judgment of God upon men, as a puniſhment of their ſin, for the reſiſtance and oppoſition, which they make to the light of the Goſpel. When ſinners do not receive the truth in the love of it, their refuſal of the truth is followed with ſtrong deluſions. 2 Theſ. ii. 10, 11. *Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved; for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lye.* This is principally intended of the *Papiſts*, or the *Antichriſtian* faction; but it may refer to all others, that receive ſuch errors, as are deſtructive to Chriſtianity.

(6.) The reception which the *Arian* or *Socinian* error, in the denial of Chriſt's eternal Godhead, finds among us, is to be imputed to the general approbation, which *Arminianiſm* meets with in this nation. *Arminianiſm* has too great a tendency, to lead perſons to *Socinianiſm:* The former is a root, or ſtock, whereon the latter may

be eaſily grafted. There are many *Arminians*, who never come to be *Socinians*, in the denial of Chriſt's Godhead; but there is too great a harmony between them, in ſeveral things. Tho' ſome *Arminians* know where to make a ſtand, and to run no farther, yet the incogitancy of others is ſo great, that they know not where to ſtop, till they come to the height of the *Socinian* errors.

If we would be preſerved from the infection of the *Arians* and *Socinians*, who deny the eternal Deity of Chriſt, we muſt not then advance our reaſon above ſcripture revelation; we muſt not be led by the miſtakes of our own underſtandings, or be governed by the enmity of our wills; we muſt not give way to a fickle inconſtant temper; we muſt not harbour the injections of Satan, which are full of ſpite againſt Chriſt, and are to his diſparagement; we muſt not reſiſt the light of the Goſpel, and we muſt not in the leaſt favour the *Arminian* errors.

2. I ſhall ſhew the malignity of the error of them, who deny Chriſt to be the true God, to raiſe in us a juſt fear of it.

(1.) To deny Chriſt to be the true God, is to overthrow the whole ſyſtem of the Goſpel. The ſubject of the Goſpel, and what it every were illuſtrates, and preſents us with, is Chriſt, as he is God and man. If Chriſt, in both his natures, be the ſubject of the Goſpel, what will the Goſpel be, but

but a great flouriſh without any ſubſtance, if we deny the Godhead of Chriſt?

(2.) To deny Chriſt to be the true God, is to deny him to be a Saviour. We may ſay concerning the Godhead of Chriſt, if Chriſt be not God, our faith is in vain, and we are yet in our ſins. If he were not God, he could not ſatisfy for ſin; he could not redeem our ſoul, and remove our guilt; he could not reconcile us to God, nor be a mediator to ſtand between God and us, he could not juſtifie us before God, nor purchaſe heaven for us; he could not quicken us, when we are dead in our treſpaſſes and ſins; he could not convert us to God, and bring us to glory. If Chriſt were not the true God, but only a creature, there is not one ſaving benefit, that we could expect from him, and he could never be the author of eternal life unto us.

(3.) To deny Chriſt to be the true God, is to deſtroy the foundation, whereon we are to build our faith, and hope of ſalvation. We cannot be ſaved without Chriſt, and we could never be ſaved by him, if he were not God. *Every ſpirit, that confeſſeth not, that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is not of God.* 1 Joh. iv. 3. Every ſpirit that is not of God, we may judge whither it muſt go, and where it muſt dwell. There is not any thing that will atone for the disbelief of Chriſt's Godhead, becauſe it is the fundamental prop or ſtay, and the

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pillar of our ſalvation. If any one hold this, and live anſwerable to it, tho' he differ from us in a thouſand other things, yet we ought to have favourable and charitable thoughts of him; becauſe it ſecures the main foundation, upon which he is to ſtand, and will over balance a multitude of involuntary errors. When *Philip* baptized the *Eunuch*, he required no more, than the belief and confeſſion of this truth. Acts viii. 37. *If thou believeſt with all thy heart, thou mayſt: and he ſaid, I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God.* He believed that Jeſus Chriſt was the Son of God, and this was a proof, that he had the eſſentials of Chriſtianity. There is no way of ſalvation made known to us, in the Goſpel, but by Chriſt, and therefore we cannot, upon ſcripture grounds, hope for the ſalvation of them, that go out of the world, without believing and acknowledging Chriſt to be the true God. We may, without any breach of charity, ſay, that a final obſtinate denial of the Godhead of Chriſt, will exclude perſons from ſalvation. It is ſaid to be a damnable hereſy. 2 *Pet.* ii. 2. Falſe teachers are ſaid to bring in privily, damnable hereſies, and ſo bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction. One of the damnable hereſies, which they brought in, and which was the ſpring of all the reſt, was this; they denied the Lord that bought them.

them. There muſt be no indifference or neutrality in our ſpirits, concerning the Godhead of Chriſt, but it is what we muſt, under the Goſpel, neceſſarily believe, for our ſalvation. It is the common faith of all ſaints, and it was but once deliver'd to them. *Jude* 3. It was but once deliver'd to the ſaints, but it muſt be preſerved unalterable and unmixed, and therefore we muſt contend earneſtly for it.

II. If Chriſt is the true God as well as man, let us get our faith ſtrengthen'd in the belief of this myſtery. How is it, that we muſt do this? I anſwer, it is no leſs than the power of God, that can create in us a firm belief of this myſtery, therefore we muſt pray to God, to work it in us. 1 Cor. xii. 3. *None can ſay Jeſus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*, viz. none can ſay this, believingly, or from his heart. We cannot believe Chriſt to be God, unleſs a power from heaven leads us into the belief of the revelation, which is made of it to us, in the word. It is not fleſh and blood, that can reveal this to us, but our Father which is in heaven, *Matth.* xvi. 17. We may eaſily ſay in words, that Chriſt is the true God; we may read over whole volumes wrote in defence of this truth; we may know all the ſcriptures that prove it, and may be able ſtrongly and nervoſely to plead for it, and yet have nothing of a feeling heart-moving

perſuaſion, to believe that Chriſt is the true God: The belief of this can be wrought in us, by no other than God.

When we read the hiſtory of the Goſpel, and weigh the arguments which may be brought to prove Chriſt to be the true God, it may draw us to aſſent to this doctrine; but without the ſpecial influence of the Holy Spirit, on our hearts, we cannot believe in Chriſt, as he is God. It is God that muſt enlighten our underſtandings, and draw the curtain from before this myſtery, or elſe we can have no proſpect of it. It is God, by his Spirit, that darts in the glory of Chriſt upon our minds, and then our whole ſouls are carried out, to believe in him, and to love him.

We muſt not ſatisfy ourſelves with a hiſtorical faith, or a ſpeculative, diſcurſive knowledge of the Godhead of Chriſt; but we muſt pray to God, to give us a fiducial knowledge of it, or a knowledge which may enliven our affections, and expreſs itſelf in ſuitable actions. Chriſt is revealed in our nature, and declared in his word; but we muſt believe in him, and then he ſhall be revealed in us. Gal. i. 15, 16. *It pleaſed God, —— to reveal his Son in me.* The revelation of Chriſt, in our nature, will not profit us, if he be not alſo revealed in us. If Chriſt is the true God, as well as man, this may encourage ſinners to look

to

to him, and it may be a comfort to all that truſt in him.

1. If Chriſt is the true God, then this may encourage ſinners to look to him; becauſe, as he is God, he can do all things for them, and he can give them all things, whereof they can ſtand in need. All that they want he has, and all that he has they want: he can break their ſtony hearts, and can give them a heart of fleſh; he can forgive their ſins, and can blot out their tranſgreſſions; he can cauſe light to riſe upon them in their darkneſs, and can give them life, when they are dead. Sinners may look to Chriſt for pardon, juſtification, and power againſt their corruptions, and when they come to him, he will fill their emptineſs with his boundleſs goodneſs.

2. If Chriſt is the true God, then it may be a comfort to all that truſt in him. To believe in him, as he is the true God, is eternal life. 1 Joh. v. 20. *This is the true God, and eternal life.* It is not of God the Father, but of Chriſt, that the apoſtle ſpeaks; and the ſenſe of the words is this; as Chriſt is the true God, ſo to be united to him is eternal life. When we get into Chriſt by faith, we ſhall obtain eternal life.

Faith in Chriſt is a remedy againſt all the evils, which believers may fear, or meet with, in their paſſage to heaven. *John*

xxiv. 2. Chriſt having foretold in the thirteenth chapter, both the treachery of *Judas*, and the apoſtaſy of *Peter*, and knowing that the diſciples were in great conſternation, and that they were depreſſed with ſorrowful thoughts, and agitated with many fears, he in this verſe arms them againſt their future fears and troubles. *Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe alſo in me.* At the ſight of approaching dangers and difficulties, the hearts of believers are filled with trouble. *Let not your heart be troubled.* Chriſt ſpeaks of a trouble, that is like the diſorder of a routed army, or the agitation of a troubled water, that rages and throws up mud and ſlime from the bottom. When the hearts of the believers are moſt troubled, it is faith in Chriſt, that gives them relief. *Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe alſo in me*, viz. When you believe in God as the Creator, Governor, and Preſerver of all things, you muſt believe in me, as the Saviour of ſinners: When you believe in the power, goodneſs, faithfulneſs, and mercy of God, you muſt believe alſo in me, for I am one with him in all his glorious perfections: When you believe his predictions and promiſes, you muſt believe in me, as the perſon in whom they are accompliſhed: When you believe in God, as the fountain of your ſalva-

vation, you must relie upon me, as the purchaser of it: You must cast yourselves on me, as your Mediator and all-sufficient Saviour, who has pacified your judge, and procured your pardon. Faith in Christ is as effectual for our good and comfort, as faith in God the Father. When Christ injoined us to believe in him, as he was too faithful to invade his Father's rights, so he was too merciful to put us upon a fruitless attempt: He would never have commanded us to believe in him, as we do in God the Father, if he had not with God the same power, grace and mercy to save us. Jesus Christ, as he is the true God, has tender compassions to pity us, sovereign grace to pardon us, ardent affections to embrace us, a solid peace to quiet us, a spring of everflowing and overflowing goodness to satisfy us, and infinite and almighty power to rescue and deliver us from our enemies. When we believe in God the Father, we must believe in God the Son, because the Father and Christ are one in saving, one in preserving, and one in perfecting believers. O wonderful and astonishing mystery of love, wherein we may see both the Father and the Son, acting in conjunction for our tranquillity and eternal salvation!

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, and the only wise God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, be all honour, glory, power, majesty, might, and dominion, ascribed, henceforth and for evermore, Amen.

OF THE

UNION

OF THE

Divine and human Nature,

IN THE

Perſon of CHRIST.

OF THE UNION OF THE Divine and human Nature, IN THE Perſon of CHRIST.

John i. 14.

The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.

THE weakeſt Chriſtians muſt have a knowledge of the perſon of Chriſt, they muſt know the eternity of his Godhead, or they muſt know him in his glory, as he is God, and

and they muſt know the truth of his manhood, or they muſt know him in the ignominy of his ſufferings, and death, as he is man, before they can know the way of ſalvation, or believe in him for eternal life: They muſt believe his ſufferings to be infinite in their merit, to give ſatisfaction to God's juſtice, but they cannot do this, if they do not believe him to be God; they muſt likewiſe believe the reality of his ſufferings, but this they cannot do, if they do not know him to be man. The divine nature of Chriſt put infinite merit into his ſufferings and death, and his being man gave him a capacity to ſuffer: Had he not been God, he could not have ſatisfied for our ſins, and had he not been man he could not have ſuffer'd for them. We muſt know Chriſt in both his natures, which make but one perſon; as we muſt know God, before we can worſhip him aright; ſo we muſt know Chriſt, as he is God and man in one perſon, before we can believe in him for ſalvation: To worſhip the unknown God, is no worſhip, and to profeſs a belief in Chriſt, without ſome diſtinct knowledge of him, is no faith. Let the natural underſtandings of Chriſtians be ever ſo mean, they muſt have ſome knowledge of Chriſt, in his Godhead, and in his manhood, before they can act faith on him.

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We may obſerve four things, in the words of the text.

I. There is an Union of the divine and human natures in Chriſt. *The Word was made fleſh.* By fleſh, which the *Hebrews* call *Baſar*, בשר and the *Greeks* σὰρξ, we muſt underſtand the whole man, conſiſting of a true body and a reaſonable ſoul.

II. When Chriſt had taken upon him our fleſh, he, for a time, abode here on earth. *The Word was made fleſh,* * *and dwelt among us,* ἐσκήνωσεν, it ſignifies, he dwelt with us as in tents or tabernacles. He was bodily preſent with men, till he finiſh'd his work.

III. Chriſt has a fulneſs of all grace, whereby he is qualified for his work. *Full of grace and truth.* He viſibly and familiarly converſed among us, but with that fulneſs of grace and truth, which could not be in any meer creature. No leſs than the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in Chriſt. Col. ii. 9. *In him dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.* † The fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in Chriſt mediator, not by types and ſhadows, but ſubſtantially and really. To dwell, is to ſtay and reſide in a proper ſtation. The Gentiles thought no more than a partial divinity

* As the very learned *Budaeus* renders it, Quaſi inter nos habuit tabernaculum.

† Ἐν αὐτῷ κατοικεῖ πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τ᾽ Θειότητος σωματικῶς.

and they muſt know the truth of his manhood, or they muſt know him in the ignominy of his ſufferings, and death, as he is man, before they can know the way of ſalvation, or believe in him for eternal life: They muſt believe his ſufferings to be infinite in their merit, to give ſatisfaction to God's juſtice, but they cannot do this, if they do not believe him to be God; they muſt likewiſe believe the reality of his ſufferings, but this they cannot do, if they do not know him to be man. The divine nature of Chriſt put infinite merit into his ſufferings and death, and his being man gave him a capacity to ſuffer: Had he not been God, he could not have ſatisfied for our ſins, and had he not been man he could not have ſuffer'd for them. We muſt know Chriſt in both his natures, which make but one perſon; as we muſt know God, before we can worſhip him aright; ſo we muſt know Chriſt, as he is God and man in one perſon, before we can believe in him for ſalvation: To worſhip the unknown God, is no worſhip, and to profeſs a belief in Chriſt, without ſome diſtinct knowledge of him, is no faith. Let the natural underſtandings of Chriſtians be ever ſo mean, they muſt have ſome knowledge of Chriſt, in his Godhead, and in his manhood, before they can act faith on him.

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I. There is an Union of the divine and human natures in Chriſt. *The Word was made fleſh.* By fleſh, which the *Hebrews* call *Baſar*, בשר and the *Greeks* σὰρξ, we muſt underſtand the whole man, conſiſting of a true body and a reaſonable ſoul.

II. When Chriſt had taken upon him our fleſh, he, for a time, abode here on earth. *The Word was made fleſh,* * *and dwelt among us,* ἐσκήνωσεν, it ſignifies, he dwelt with us as in tents or tabernacles. He was bodily preſent with men, till he finiſh'd his work.

III. Chriſt has a fulneſs of all grace, whereby he is qualified for his work. *Full of grace and truth.* He viſibly and familiarly converſed among us, but with that fulneſs of grace and truth, which could not be in any meer creature. No leſs than the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in Chriſt. Col. ii. 9. *In him dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.* † The fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in Chriſt mediator, not by types and ſhadows, but ſubſtantially and really. To dwell, is to ſtay and reſide in a proper ſtation. The Gentiles thought no more than a partial divinity

* As the very learned *Budaeus* renders it, Quaſi inter nos habuit tabernaculum.

† Ἐν αὐτῷ κατοικεῖ πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τ῀ Θεότητος σωματικῶς.

was lodg'd in their falſe gods; but the whole Deity dwells in Chriſt, not by aſſiſtance only, but by a perſonal union.

IV. The apoſtles and diſciples of Chriſt were eye witneſſes of his glory. *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* They beheld his glory, in the manifeſtation of it upon mount *Tabor*, and in his works which ſhew'd his power and glory, as of the only begotten of the Father. The particle ὡς *as* is not here a note of doubting, but of certainty, it does not ſignifie likeneſs, but the ſame thing; as *Epheſ.* v. 8. *Walk* (ſaith the apoſtle *Paul*) *as children of the light.* The meaning is; manifeſt by your works, that you are truly children of light. When the evangeliſt ſays, *As of the only begotten of the Father*; it is as if he had ſaid; we ſaw ſuch a glory in him, as became the Son of God, and was a ſufficient indication of his divine nature, becauſe it exceeded all created glory. Chriſt is here call'd the only begotten of the Father, and in another place he is called the firſt-born among many brethen, Rom. viii. 29. *That he might be called the firſt-born among many brethren.* He is the only begotten of the Father, by a natural, inconceivable, and eternal generation; but he is the firſt-born among many brethren, as he is man, and took upon him the nature of man.

The

The doctrinal propoſition, which I ſhall raiſe from the words, is this;

Jeſus Chriſt, who is true God, took upon him a body of fleſh.

In handling this doctrinal propoſition I ſhall do three things.

I. I ſhall ſhew, what kind of union there is of the divine and human natures, in the perſon of Chriſt.

II. I ſhall give reaſons, why the Son of God became man.

III. I ſhall make ſome Application.

1. *What kind of union there is of the divine and human natures, in the perſon of Chriſt.*

I ſhall begin with ſhewing, that there is a perſonal union of the Godhead and the manhood in Chriſt. The fleſh and ſoul which Chriſt took, is become one perſon with the Godhead. Two natures are united in one perſon; and this perſonal union is ſacred, myſterious, and miraculous.

I. The perſonal union of two natures in Chriſt is ſacred. Chriſt took our fleſh,

and ſo came near to us, yet he was not tainted with our ſin: He came as near to us, as it was poſſible for him to do, ſo as to eſcape the pollution of ſin. He was made of the ſame matter, of which we are made; he was conceived in the womb of the virgin; he was made in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh; he was circumciſed the eighth day, as if he had original ſin to be purged away, as well as we; and his mother obſerved the law of purification, as if his birth had been unclean; Chriſt came as near to us as he could, without the infection of ſin; and the reaſon was, that he might take away [a] original ſin in us.

When the human nature was united to the divine nature, tho' Chriſt came near to us, yet he was not touch'd with our ſin. When a body of fleſh was united to the ſecond perſon in the Godhead, no ſtain or blot was contracted, in the formation of this body: This was a work above nature, and out of the reach of it; but it was effected by the power of the holy Spirit. Luke i. 35. *The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee.* The holy Spirit, who is the third perſon in the Trinity, overſhadowed the virgin, and framed the hu-

[a] Vid. Gomar. Diſput. xxvi. ſect. 16. Cloppenburg. de inſtaurat. hom. lapſ. Witſium in ſymbolum, Exercit. xiv. Sect. 40.

man nature of Chriſt in her womb, and then united it to the divine nature. The word, *overſhadow*, alludes to the cloud, which covered the tent of the congregation, when the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. The conception of Chriſt's body in the womb of the virgin was not a work of immediate creation, which is the production of ſomething out of nothing; but it was a work of mediate creation, becauſe the body of Chriſt was educted or brought into form, out of a pre-exiſtent matter, which was in the womb of the virgin. The pre-exiſtent matter, out of which the body of Chriſt was brought, had nothing in it but a bare, paſſive, obediential capacity, to receive the ſtamp, which the holy Ghoſt imprinted on it. In the conception of Chriſt's body, the fleſh of the virgin had no active diſpoſition, but only a paſſive diſpoſition for the work. The humane nature of Chriſt is called both the fruit of the earth, and the branch of the Lord. Iſa. vi. 2. *The branch of the Lord ſhall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth ſhall be excellent and comely.* As the matter of Chriſt's body was the ſubſtance of the virgin, it was the fruit of the earth; but as his body was conceived, in a ſupernatural way, and as the fleſh of the virgin, out of which the Spirit framed his body, was pure, free from all corruption, ſeparated,

ed from all ſin, and put into the fartheſt diſtance from it, it was the branch of the Lord's planting. If we conſider the matter of Chriſt's body, it was from the earth; but if we conſider the manner of its conception, it was pure, ſpotleſs and heavenly. If it be asked, how Chriſt could be born of a woman, and yet not be defiled with original ſin? I anſwer, [b] We may ſoon reply to the queſtion, if we do but weigh what has been already ſaid. The matter of Chriſt's body was from the womb of the virgin, and ſo he was the ſon of *Adam*; but he was not the ſon of *Adam*, by the law of a natural generation; and *Adam* was not a common head, to repreſent him, and therefore he was conceived, and born without the defilement of original ſin. *Adam*, as he was a common perſon, was to beget children, in his own likeneſs, and he was to propagate his nature by generation; but Chriſt did not come of *Adam* by a natural generation, and therefore he is ſaid to be holy, and ſeparated from ſinners. Heb. vii. 26. *Such a high Prieſt became us, as is holy, harmleſs, ſeparated from ſinners.* Jeſus Chriſt, as he was man, had a mother, and he was conceived in her womb, but it

[b] Vid. Witſium in ſymbolum, Ex. 16. Sect. 39. de Oecon. Foed. lib. II. cap. 4. Sect. 10. Marckii compend. cap. 4. Sect. 16.

was

was without ſin, becauſe he was conceived by the holy Spirit : It was the holy Spirit that fitted and prepared a body for him. He was made of a woman, but he was not begotten of a woman. Gal. iv. 4. *Chriſt Jeſus was made of a woman, made under the law.* The conception and birth of Chriſt was altogether holy, and the unſtained purity of his conception and birth was that whereon our ſalvation depended; becauſe if he had not been conceived, and born without ſin, he could not have been the Saviour of ſinners.

II. The perſonal union of two natures in Chriſt is myſterious, and ſecret. In every myſtery there is ſomething that is hid. When it is ſaid, *the Word was made fleſh*, it is a propoſition that carries the greateſt ſecreſy in it. It is the myſtery of godlineſs, and it is a great myſtery. 1 Tim. iii. 16. *Without controverſy, great is the myſtery of godlineſs. God was manifeſted in the fleſh.* Godlineſs is the life of grace, and the light of the greateſt truth. What is it, that, without controverſy, is the great myſtery of godlineſs? it is the manifeſtation of God in the fleſh, Θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκὶ, *God was manifeſt* (or *ſeen*) *in the fleſh.* Whatſoever was ſeen of God, before the incarnation of Chriſt, was only ſome effect of the Godhead, but not the Godhead it ſelf; but in Chriſt, the very Godhead is cloathed, with

fleſh.

flesh. The Apostle in using the concrete word, God, and not the abstract, Godhead, speaks of the union of the divine and human nature, in one subsistence. The manifestation of God in the flesh is the greatest mystery that ever was in the world. No creature could think of it, before it was done, and no creature can search it to the bottom, now when it is effected. Under the law, the devil aped most things, that were injoyned in the worship of God, and he has done the same under the gospel: But in all his false shews and counterfeit appearances he never imitated the mystery of God manifest in the flesh, which is the wonder of the christian religion. The devil never entertained one previous thought, that God would send his eternal Son, to be a temporary sufferer, and that he would veil his Godhead, with the rags of our flesh: This was not obvious to the devil, or to any other creature, before it was revealed.

III. The personal union of two natures in Christ is miraculous. There is no less than a croud of wonders in it. The cloathing of the second person in the Trinity with our flesh is wonderful, beyond what we can conceive or express. It is the most miraculous thing that ever the divine, eternal Being produced.

1. It

1. It is a moſt miraculous Union, becauſe the condeſcention of God in it is moſt wonderful. If a clod of earth were united to the ſun in the firmament, it would be wonderful, but nothing ſo miraculous, as the Union of the human nature to the Godhead of Chriſt. If the brighteſt Angel, or Spirit, ſhould joyn himſelf to the moſt contemptible and deformed creature, that could be found out in the world, it would be thought a ſtrange condeſcention; and yet it would bear no proportion to the condeſcention of God, in becoming man. The difference and diſtance, between God and the human nature, is infinitely greater than the inequality which is between the loweſt creature, and the higheſt Angel. For Chriſt, as he was man, to dye and ſuffer upon the croſs for ſinners, was a great wonder; but for God to become man, was a condeſcention ſuperlatively wonderful.

2. It is a moſt miraculous union, becauſe the two natures that are brought together, and perſonally united in Chriſt, are every way unequal, and infinitely diſtant from one another. What things can be more improportionable, and remotely diſtant from one another, than finite and infinite, limited and incomprehenſible, eternal and temporary, almighty power and miſerable infirmity, the fountain of

life, and mortal dying fleſh, the higheſt being, and mere nothing, irreſiſtible ſtrength, and weakneſs, perfect knowledge and ignorance, immutability and changeableneſs, unmixed bleſſedneſs, and a curſed nature! The diſtance between our nature, and the divine nature of Chriſt, was ſo great and wide, that it was only poſſible for a Spirit, who is infinite in his eſſence and perfections, to fill it up. The two natures which are the terms of the perſonal union in Chriſt, were infinitely diſtant from one another, but now they are moſt ſtrictly and cloſely united together. It cannot be ſaid of the humanity of Chriſt, that it is every where preſent, as the Godhead is. The humanity of Chriſt cannot be in all places, where the Godhead is. The Lutherans do not receive the blaſphemous and idolatrous conceit of the papiſts, about tranſubſtantiation, yet this muſt be ſaid of them, that when they plead for the ubiquity and omnipreſence of Chriſt's body, they deſtroy the true nature of it, and ſay, in effect, it is changed into the nature of God; becauſe whatever has ubiquity, or is preſent every where, muſt be God. The Godhead unites itſelf to the whole humanity, and whereever the humanity of Chriſt is, there his Godhead is, perſonally conjoyned to it, beſtows excellencies on it, and renders it incapable of ſin.

3. It

3. It is a miraculous union, becauſe when the two natures are moſt cloſely and ſtrictly united in Chriſt, yet they are neither confounded, nor changed into one another. When the Son of God united our fleſh to himſelf, he became one with it; but there is no tranſmutation of the divine nature into our fleſh. The humanity of Chriſt is neither turned into the Godhead, nor is the Godhead turned into the humanity: The dimenſions which are proper and inſeparable to a body, are not deſtroyed in the manhood of Chriſt, but preſerved and kept entire; and the power of his Godhead is neither weakened, nor diſſolved. The Godhead of Chriſt remains unchangeable, and the eternal perfections of it do not ſuſtain the leaſt detriment, in being united to a body of fleſh. As the Godhead is not blemiſhed, nor impaired by the union, and loſes nothing of its eſſential glory; ſo the humanity of Chriſt is not ſwallowed up in the Godhead, as a drop of water is in the ſea. The divine nature of Chriſt has loſt none of its excellencies, and his human nature, which is united to the Godhead, and has its exiſtence in it, is not deprived of any thing, which is proper to it, and ſo it will continue to be forever.

(1.) If the perſonal union of the divine and human nature in Chriſt, be a thing not only every way ſacred, but a great myſtery; then

let us ſearch farther into it: In this undertaking we have the Angels for our companions, and it is honourable for us to be employed as they are. The myſtery of God manifeſt in the fleſh, is what they ſtoop down to look into, and are tranſported and raviſhed with the ſight of it, *which things the Angels deſire to look into*, 2 Pet. 1. 12. There is a bottomleſs depth in the myſtery of Chriſt's incarnation, and eternity will be taken up, in ſearching into it; we muſt not be diſcouraged in the ſearches which we make into the evidence of it, but muſt go as far as we can in it; at the ſame time not pretending to comprehend the modus of it.

(2.) If the perſonal union of two natures in Chriſt be moſt wonderful and miraculous, then let us get ourſelves more and more poſſeſs'd with admiring thoughts of the great myſtery of God manifeſt in the fleſh. Let us mount up in the admiration of that complication of wonders and miracles, which is in the perſonal union of two natures in Chriſt; we may perceive what our ſtate is by our frame and carriage herein. If our ſouls are lifted up, if our hearts are affected with this myſtery, and if we ſee a glory in it, then we may, for our unſpeakable comfort, believe, that God was manifeſt in the fleſh, to ſave us, and to prepare us for a glorious eternal fellowſhip

ſhip with himſelf; but if we have no deſires to hear this myſtery unfolded, and no reliſh of what is ſaid about it, but are like lifeleſs logs, in hearing what is ſaid concerning it, and yet do not bewail this ſluggiſh poſture of ſpirit in our ſelves, then it is to be feared, that we are ſtrangers to the life and power of godlineſs.

When the eyes of our minds are opened, and when our ſouls are renewed, there is that in Chriſt, which will attract admiration from us. Is it not to be admired, that two natures, infinitely diſtant, ſhould be ſo cloſely united, as to become one perſon, and yet no property eſſential to either of them, be deſtroyed? Is it not a moſt affecting conſideration, that God ſhould come down from heaven, and ſpeak to us in our fleſh, dwell among us, and, at the ſame time, have incomprehenſible glory, and inconceivable grief, infinite joy in his Deity and inexpreſſible ſorrow, in his humanity? Is it not to be admired, that the moſt illuſtrious being ſhould appear in the form of a ſervant; that God upon a throne, ſhould be a child in a cradle, the ancient of days; a ſucking infant, and the thundering creator a weeping babe? if we do not admire all this, how is it to be ſuppoſed, that there is any ſpiritual heavenly life in us?

II. *The*

II. *The reaſons why the Son of God became man.*

I ſhall now give reaſons, why the Son of God became man.

1. The Son of God became man, that he might make the glory of the Godhead as viſible to us, as is poſſible. Chriſt by taking our fleſh, has raiſed a mount of viſion for the moſt quickſighted creatures. In the perſon of Chriſt, God-man, by virtue of the union of the manhood to the Godhead, there is a compleat image of all the attributes of God, in ſuch a tranſcendent and eminent way, as is both incompatible with, and incommunicable to any mere creatures. It is in Chriſt that the Godhead, which is inviſible and incomprehenſible in itſelf, is manifeſted. The perſonal union of man's nature to the Son of God, is what makes known more of the glory of God, which before was lock'd up in the Godhead, than all the ways of mere and ſimple creation can ever do, that may be ſuppoſed. More of the glory of God ſhines forth in the man Chriſt Jeſus, having the Godhead dwelling in him, than would have done, if God had created a multitude and a variety of more worlds; becauſe the things of God could only have appeared in them, as footſteps and prints of the Deity; but in the man Chriſt Jeſus,

God himſelf appears perſonally, and with ſo great and ſupereminent a glory, that the Angels cover their faces, and fall down before it. When the type of Chriſt's perſonal glory, as he was to come in the fleſh, was preſented to the ſeraphs, they are ſaid to cover their faces, *Iſai.* i. 2, 3, 4. *I ſaw the Lord ſitting on his throne, high and lifted up, and his train fill'd the temple; above it ſtood the ſeraphs, and each one had ſix wings, with one pair he cover'd his face, with another he cover'd his feet, and with the other he flew: and one cried to another, and ſaid, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hoſts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* This was a viſion of God manifeſted in the human nature, becauſe Chriſt applied it to himſelf, as ſpoke of him by way of prophecy, as he was to come in the fleſh, *Joh.* xii. 41. *Theſe things ſaid Iſaias when he ſaw his glory.* The glory which the ſeraphs celebrated, was the glory which Chriſt has in the redemption of ſinners, becauſe it is ſaid to be a glory that fills the earth. *The whole earth* (ſay they) *is full of his glory.* They were ſilent of the glory which God has in the vaſt heavens, and ſpeak only of the glory which Chriſt has in the earth, as he is the ſaviour of ſinners. By the works of creation and providence we may know there is a God; but there is ſuch a peculiar impreſſion of ma-

majeſty and ſuperlative glory on Chriſt, that when we ſee it, we muſt then ſay, this is no other than God himſelf, dwelling in our fleſh. The glory of the Godhead, to the utmoſt of what can be manifeſted of it to us, ſhines forth in the face or perſon of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. 6. *The God of this world has blinded the minds of ſuch as believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt who is the image of God ſhould ſhine to them: God, who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, has ſhin'd in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* The apoſtle expreſſes two things, that Chriſt is the image of God; and that the knowledge of the glory of God is diſcovered to us in the face or perſon of Chriſt.

1. Chriſt is ſaid to be the image of God, *ver.* 4. he is the image of God two ways: He is the natural image of God, as he poſſeſſes in one eſſence with the Father, all the glory and excellencies of the Deity: and he is the image of God to us as he repreſents the Father to us, in the perfection of his nature, and renders him viſible to the eyes of our minds, *Joh.* xiv. 9. *He that has ſeen me,* (ſaith Chriſt) *has ſeen the Father.*

2. The knowledge of the glory of God is diſcovered to us in the face or perſon of Chriſt. As the ſoul looks out in the face of a man, and we ſee more of his inward

ward diſpoſition in his face or countenance, than in his whole body beſides; ſo it is through the veil of Chriſt's fleſh, that more of the glory of the Godhead is to be ſeen, than in all the creatures. The divine nature falls not under the perception of ſenſe; but the glory of it ſparkles and ſhines forth in the face or perſon of Chriſt. The glory of all God's attributes, which before the incarnation of Chriſt, lay hid in the cabinet of the divine nature, are now diſcovered to us in Chriſt, they center in him, and, in a full combination, ſet off one another with the brighteſt luſtre.

II. The Son of God became man, that he might tranſact as mediator, to ſatisfie for ſin, and to ſave ſinners, 1 *Tim.* i. 15. *It is a faithful ſaying*, (viz. not to be doubted and queſtioned) *and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners.* This is what is every where proclaimed in the goſpel from firſt to laſt. The end of Chriſt, in coming into the world, was to ſave ſinners; and that he might ſave them, it was neceſſary for him to ſatisfie for their ſins. Death was threatened as the puniſhment of ſin; and when it was committed, there was a neceſſity for death to be inflicted for the honour of God's truth and faithfulneſs. The law of innocence, or the moral law, did not exclude the ſubſtitution of a ſurety, to ſatisfie for ſin in the ſtead

of ſinners; but it left no room for the relaxation of the puniſhment, which was deſerved by ſin. It did not oppoſe the tranſferring of puniſhment from the ſinner to the ſurety, but it abſolutely forbid the remitting of the puniſhment, either in the whole or in part. If God had aboliſhed his law, it would have been a diſcredit to his wiſdom, and it would have reflected upon his righteouſneſs, and would have implyed a change of the rectitude of his nature. The law having once paſs'd, and the threatening againſt ſin being gone out of God's mouth, ſatisfaction was either to be made for ſin, when it was committed or ſinners were eternally to periſh. Chriſt undertook to make ſatisfaction for ſinners by fulfilling the precepts, and ſuffering the penalties of the law; and therefore he took a body of fleſh, that he might ſuffer and ſatisfie for us. If he had been only God, he could not have ſuffered, becauſe the divine nature is incapable of death, pain, grief, and of all other ſufferings. If he had been mere man, he could not have ſatisfied for us, becauſe his obedience would have mounted no higher than a finite worth or merit, which could never have repaired thewrong done to the juſtice and holineſs of God by our ſins. It is by the perſonal union of the divine and human nature in Chriſt, that all difficulties on both ſides are removed. The

The human nature of Chriſt gave him a fitneſs to ſuffer for ſin. It was his being man that made him capable to bear the penalty of the law, to be nailed to a croſs, to breath forth dying and expiring groans, under the laſh of vindictive juſtice, to be expoſed to the flames of infinite wrath, and to receive every ſtroke and blow which belonged to ſinners.

The divine nature of Chriſt gave him ability to ſatisfie for ſin. It not only ſupported him under the cruſhing weight of his ſufferings, but it rendered them infinitely meritorious. It was ſo ordered by God, that without the ſhedding of blood there could be no remiſſion of ſin, *Heb.* ix. 22. It was not the blood of the nobleſt creature that could purge away ſin, but it was no leſs than the blood of him, who was God and man in one perſon, that could do this. When the blood of Chriſt was ſhed, and poured out for ſin, it was the blood of God, and it is called ſo, *Acts* xx. 28. *Feed the church of God, which he purchaſed with his own blood.* The apoſtle here gave a charge to the paſtors of the church at *Epheſus*, and urged them to be indefatigable in watching the flock, over which God had ſet them, and in feeding the church of God, becauſe it is what he has purchaſed with his own blood. If Chriſt ſhed his blood to redeem the church, and

ſpared not the effuſion of it to redeem ſinners, then preachers and miniſters of the goſpel ought to ſpend their time and ſtrength, to convert ſinners, and to confirm believers. If it be asked how blood can be attributed to God, who is a pure, infinite and eternal ſpirit. I anſwer; it is Chriſt that is here ſpoke of; in him the Godhead is ſo cloſely united to the manhood, that the two natures make but one perſon, and therefore what is proper to either of the two natures, is aſcribed to the perſon of Chriſt. This is done by what is called a communication of properties. The ſhedding of blood, which belongs only to the humane nature of Chriſt, is predicated of him as he is God, becauſe his two natures are perſonally united, and are no more then one ſubſiſtence. The ſenſe of the words is this; he who ſhed his blood for the redemption of ſinners, is God as well as Man: If this had not been the meaning of the apoſtle, it would have been more abſurd to ſay, the blood of Chriſt is the blood of God, than it would be to ſay, the growth of a tree is the life of a rational ſoul. Chriſt, as he was man, had blood to ſhed; and as he was God, he made the blood that was ſhed to be infinite in its merit, and thereby made ſuch a compenſation to the offended juſtice of God, as was commenſurate to the divine Law.

Law. Where there is ſatisfaction made for ſin, there muſt not only be ſuffering, but there muſt be a ſuffering ſo valuable, as to repair the injury done by ſin.

When Chriſt made ſatisfaction to God for our ſins, it was neceſſary that he ſhould be man, and that he ſhould be God. It was neceſſary that he ſhould be man, that he might ſuffer, and that the compenſation which he made, might be ſuitable, becauſe the human nature had offended; and the equity of juſtice required, that the nature which had offended ſhould ſuffer: It was neceſſary that he ſhould be God, that the ſatisfaction which he made might be infinite, to anſwer, and make reparation to infinite juſtice: the human nature of Chriſt alone could not ſatisfie, becauſe of its weakneſs, and the divine nature could not ſuffer, becauſe of its perfection; therefore Chriſt had a human nature, wherein to ſuffer, and he had a divine nature, to make the merit of his ſufferings infinite, and every way ſufficient.

The Son of God became man that he might ſatisfie for our ſins, and by the ſatisfaction which he made, he laid the foundation of our eternal happineſs. If this be ſo, then the conſideration hereof may move believers to thankfulneſs, and

may prevail with ſinners, no longer to refuſe the greateſt mercy.

1. It may move believers to thankfulneſs. When they conſider, that the Son of God became man, that he might ſatisfie for their ſins, and that it is through him, they are delivered from eternal death, how thankful ought they to be? Chriſt has brought mercy to believers by the ſhedding his blood, and has cured their deſperate diſeaſe, by his own death.

2. It may prevail with ſinners, no longer to refuſe the greateſt mercy. Chriſt has ſatisfied for ſin, but none can plead this ſatisfaction for themſelves, but they that receive Chriſt, and believe in him. There are two things that lye before ſinners, one of which they muſt chooſe. If they come to Chriſt by faith, they may believe that Chriſt has taken upon himſelf their ſin, to ſatisfie for it, and has made over to them his righteouſneſs, to juſtifie them; but if they do not accept of Chriſt, then they muſt, in their own perſons, bear the puniſhment of ſin. The puniſhment of ſin made Chriſt cry out, altho' he had almighty power to ſupport him, under his burden; what will it then make ſinners do, who are but weak and frail creatures? They who dye in their ſins, muſt begin their ſufferings, but where will they end? They will not

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be able to give a ſatisfaction for ſin, that is infinite in value; they muſt therefore give one, that will be infinite in time. They muſt always be enduring pain, and yet they ſhall never come to the period of their ſufferings. When they have run through millions of years, they will ſtill have farther to go than they have gone: When they look back, they will find a beginning, but when they look forwards, they will find no end: The farther they look, they will ſtill ſee that more remains to come, than is paſt.

III. The Son of God became man, that he might bring ſinners near to God. There are two things, that hinder our union to God, diſtance, and contrariety. The diſtance between God and us, as we are creatures, is not only great, but infinite; it is Chriſt that fills up this infinite diſtance, by aſſuming our nature: beſides, there is a contrariety between God and us; as we are ſinners, we are not only infinitely diſtant from God, but we are moſt contrary to him. To be a creature, is to be infinitely diſtant from God, and to be a ſinner is to be contrary to the eternal purity, and holineſs of his nature. It is Chriſt, that fills up the diſtance, which is between God and us, and takes away the contrariety, which we naturally have in us to God. As he fills up the diſtance between

between God and the creature, ſo he removes the contradiction, which is between God and the ſinner. Chriſt brings God and us, who are ſinners, to a bleſſed agreement, by laying his hand upon God, and by taking hold of our nature: he is become Immanuel, or God with us. Chriſt made way for God's dwelling among the ſons of men, and for his making the fulleſt communication of his goodneſs to us. It is by the union of the human nature, to the Son of God, that way is made for God, in Chriſt, and for his ſake, to communicate himſelf to us, in a much higher way, than ever could have been expected, upon the account of the law of creation, and the relation which is between him and us, as he is our creator, and as we are his creatures. God has united our nature to himſelf, and has thereby brought us into the neareſt union with himſelf, whereof we are capable, as we are mere creatures; and the near union, into which God has brought us, with himſelf, is a medium for the higheſt communication of grace and glory, that we can receive from him. God firſt united the human nature to the perſon of Chriſt, and by this union he brings us near to himſelf, and then beſtows the richeſt gifts and bleſſings on us.

IV. The Son of God became man, that he might endear and ſweeten God to us, and

and render him fit for our converſe. Communion lies in perſons and things, that are ſuitable and agreed. We are not only far from God, as we are creatures, but we are contrary to God, as we are ſinners; and if Chriſt had not taken upon him our nature, and in our nature ſatisfied for our ſins, the juſtice of God would have flamed out againſt us for ever. The juſtice of God is a neceſſary perfection, pertaining to God. As he is a juſt God, he muſt diſtribute rewards to whom they belong, and he muſt puniſh all crimes, which are committed. If he did not puniſh ſin, he would deny his juſtice, and ſeem to approve of the creature's diſorders; and if he did not puniſh ſin, in the degree it merits, there would then be ſome abatement of his hatred againſt it. The juſtice of God makes him a ſun of righteouſneſs, and if there were not the interpoſure of ſome grateful ſhadow between him and us, he could not bear us, but would be a conſuming fire to us, and we ſhould dread the ſight of him, and fly from him. How is it that the ſun of righteouſneſs comes to be ſhaded, that we may come near it with comfort, and not be turned into aſhes, by the ſcorching heat of it? It is by the entering of this ſun of righteouſneſs into the tabernacle of our fleſh. It is the union of a body of fleſh to the Godhead of Chriſt, that not

only keeps off the burning fire of eternal wrath, but gives the ſun of righteouſneſs a ſhadow, to cool and refreſh us, and it is under this ſhadow, that we may ſit, with great delight. Sol. Song. ii. 3. *I ſat down* (ſays the Church) *under his ſhadow, with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.*

1. Here is a ſhadow, under which believing ſinners ſit, with great delight: This ſhadow is the human nature, or body of fleſh, wherewith the Godhead of Chriſt is cloathed: this is a ſhadow to believing ſinners, becauſe it not only clouds the brightneſs of the Godhead, that it may not oppreſs and overwhelm them, but it covers them from the heat of God's juſtice, and turns the fiery beams of it into ſhowers of love. It is to this ſhadow that poor ſinners ought to run, and when they come to it, they may ſit under it with great delight.

2. When believing ſinners ſit under the ſhadow of Chriſt, his fruit is ſweet to their taſte. They taſte the ſweetneſs of God's electing and redeeming love: This is not what all believers attain to, but many do, and all have a right to it: They that ſit under the ſhadow of Chriſt, and taſte the ſweetneſs of his fruit, if they look back, they ſee themſelves elected; if they look to their preſent ſtate, they ſee themſelves

redeemed; if they look forwards, they ſee their ſinful mortality ſwallowed up of life: They taſte the ſweetneſs of pardon and forgiveneſs: To them that have felt the weight of guilt, and known the terrors of hell, this is a pleaſant fruit; it is under the ſhadow of Chriſt that the weary and heavy laden find reſt: They taſte the ſweetneſs of juſtification, whereby they are not only acquitted from condemnation, but made righteous before God: They taſte the ſweetneſs of adoption, which gives them a title to eternal bleſſedneſs and glory: And they taſte the ſweetneſs of the Spirit's operations, and eat of the firſt fruits of heaven itſelf.

The human nature of Chriſt, as it is united to his Godhead, is a ſhadow wherein we may rejoice; and when we ſit under it, we may taſte the pleaſant fruits of Chriſt. If it were not for this ſhadow, God would baniſh us from his preſence, and we could never be fit for the communion and converſe of a righteous, holy God.

V. The Son of God became man, that he might not only have power to ſuccour us, but that he might have the tender bowels, and melted affections of the human nature, to pity us. If he had been no more than man, he could not have helped, ſuccoured, and ſuſtained us. He could not

have ſubdued our iniquities, nor have ſupplied our wants, nor have conquered our enemies; if he had been only God, he could not have had a feeling ſenſe of our weakneſs and indigency; as he is God and man, he can both pity us and prevail for us.

1. As he is man, he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; Heb. ix. 25. *We have not a high prieſt, which cannot be touch'd with a feeling of our infirmities.* As he is man, he commiſerates us in our diſtreſs, takes notice of the workings of Satan in us, experimentally knows our frame, compaſſionately remembers and conſiders that we are but mortal and ſinful duſt, has a ſenſe of our miſery, obſerves all our troubles and trials, with yerning and breathing bowels of affection, and ſympathizes with us in all our afflictions.

2. As he is God, he has almighty power to overcome, and tread under foot all our enemies, and to do for us whatſoever his inexhauſtible grace and mercy inclines him to, and what the greatneſs of our miſery calls for: he has infinite patience, to ſpare and forbear us, and he has infinite and invincible ſtrength, to diſarm Satan, to overmatch and rout the armies of hell, to reſtrain the furious multitude of wicked men, to pull out the ſting of death, to per-

perfume the grave, and to open for us a fair and wide entrance into heaven. What a comfort ought it to be to us, that he who is our Saviour is God as well as man?

VI. The Son of God became man, that we might have the ſureſt grounds of confidence, in all our approaches to God. The union of the human nature to the Godhead of Chriſt, is a foundation for our faith and confidence, in all our addreſſes to God. If Chriſt had been only man, he would have been too feeble to enſure us of finding acceptance with God the Father; if he had been only God, the infinite and incomprehenſible perfections of his divine nature would have daunted and ſcared us, and the black fumes of our own guilt would have ſtifled and damped our hopes, and fill'd us with fears; if he had been only man, he could not have interceded effectually, authoritatively, and prevailingly for us; if he had been only God, his juſtice would have been too terrible for us, and he would have deſtroyed and devoured us, inſtead of admitting us to come near him: as he is God and man, in one perſon, he is a fit object of our truſt and confidence. God, as he is a God of truth, is the primary and fundamental object of our faith; but Chriſt, as he is God manifeſted in the fleſh, is the immediate and neareſt object of our faith. Our faith muſt

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go directly and immediately to God in our fleſh, and muſt not fix on any thing by the way, leſt it be weakened by diviſion. Faith is ſtrongeſt when it adequately relies on Chriſt. There are three things which are obſtructions to faith; the infinite exactneſs and perfection of the juſtice of God, which muſt be ſatisfied; the exceeding great unworthineſs of a ſinner; and the want of a mediator. Chriſt has taken out of the way all the three aforeſaid obſtructions: He has ſatified juſtice; the mercy of God is made over to us, and his juſtice is now for us: He has cloathed us with his righteouſneſs, that we may appear beautiful and comely before God; and he is a mediator, to advocate our cauſe, and to intercede for us, that we may be ſaved to the uttermoſt.

It ought to be a marvellous encouragement to us, in all the approaches which we make to God in prayer, or in any other part of worſhip, that we go not only to a God that is reconciled, pacified, and full of compaſſions towards us, but to a God in our very nature, and cloathed in our fleſh. What a moſt amazing thing is it, to have God come to us, not in the loud thunders of the law, not in the glittering armor of his juſtice, not in the killing frowns of his anger, and not in the flaming fire of his wrath; but in our very fleſh, to

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ſpeak the moſt ſweet and gentle things to us, and to give us freedom of acceſs to his mercy-ſeat? It is by the veil of Chriſt's fleſh, that we have a new and living way conſecrated for us, in all our approaches to God, and therefore we may with boldneſs and liberty enter into the holieſt, by the blood of Jeſus. The bleſſed God has made a gate into heaven for us, not of iron and braſs, but of our fleſh, by uniting it to himſelf.

We have heard the reaſons, why the Son of God became man; if they were of force to bring him down from heaven to earth, ſhall they not quicken us, to raiſe up our hearts from the earth to heaven? If they moved him, to give himſelf for us, when we were miſerable, ſhall they not ſtir us up to give ourſelves to him, that we may be for ever happy? If they drew him from the boſom of the Father, to dwell in this vexatious world, ſhall they not conſtrain us, to forſake our luſts, and cauſe us to cleave to him, in whom we may find a heaven of eternal reſt.

III. *The Application.*

I come now to make ſome application. I am ſenſible, I have prevented myſelf, in ſome practical reflections I have made, in the proceſs of this diſcourſe; but there are

a few more conſiderations, which I ſhall urge by way of improvement, of the great myſtery of godlineſs, of which I have been ſpeaking, God manifeſted in the fleſh.

I. If Jeſus Chriſt, who became man, and took upon him a body of fleſh, is the true God; then we may herein ſee the greatneſs of the love of Chriſt. Chriſt not only became man, and took upon him our nature, which was the greateſt condeſcenſion; but he took the likeneſs of our ſinful fleſh, and he ſuffered death in our fleſh: Chriſt took the likeneſs of our ſinful fleſh; he has honoured our fleſh that was polluted. This will be a ſtanding monument of his infinite love for ever: It is a thing incomparably greater, than if a prince ſhould not only pardon a murderer, but ever after wear his priſon rags: He not only took the likeneſs of our ſinful fleſh, but he took it that he might ſuffer death in it; when he had all fulneſs, he emptied himſelf: when we were not only empty, but miſerable bankrupts, he emptied himſelf, that he might redeem us from all evil, and fill us with all good. This was propheſied of Chriſt by Daniel ix. 28. *The Meſſiah ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf.* It may be read thus; *The Meſſiah ſhall be cut off, and ſhall have nothing.* When Chriſt emptied himſelf, there was no change made in his Godhead, but

but the glory of it was veiled for a time, by the infirmities of the fleſh. When Chriſt had all fulneſs in himſelf, he left himſelf nothing, that he might fill and enrich us. If we ſhould ſee all the water of the deep ocean flow into another world, and not one drop be left behind, we ſhould ſtand aſtoniſhed at the ſight; and yet there is infinitely more reaſon for us to wonder at the low eſtate, to which Chriſt ſubmitted. We find it difficult for us to abate any thing of our worldly fulneſs, altho it be a fulneſs that is rather deluſive and chimerical, than ſatisfactory and real; what muſt it then be, for Chriſt to leave all, and come down into this world, where there is nothing but ſin and vanity? When we were ſunk into the loweſt depths of miſery, Chriſt came down from heaven to earth, and ſuffered a curſed death for us, that he might raiſe us up, and bring us into the poſſeſſion of the heavenly glory: This was matchleſs love. If angels and men had millions of years given them, for the exerciſe of their thoughts, they would never be able to find out any thing, that could be a fuller and higher expreſſion of love than this.

II. If Jeſus Chriſt, who became man, and took upon him a body of fleſh, is the true God; then he is the moſt eligible object for our ſtudy and meditation.

1. Chriſt is the perfection of all God's works; the excellencies of all things, which are either in heaven, or on the earth, are gathered together in him. Whatever the creatures expreſs of God, is to be more fully ſeen in him.

2. Chriſt is the end and drift of all ordinances. Ordinances are but ſhells and husks, without Chriſt; and therefore when we are converſant in them, our ultimate end muſt be, to have communion with Chriſt in them. When we come to ordinances, it muſt be to meet and enjoy Chriſt; but when we reſt in them, without thirſting after Chriſt, we only catch at the ſhadow, and neglect the ſubſtance.

3. Chriſt is the ſubſtance or ſummary of all ſcripture revelations. All the paſſages in the Old and New Teſtament are but like ſo many lines, drawn from a large circumference, which meet in Chriſt, as their uniting point, or univerſal centre. If we conſider all the moſt material parts of the holy ſcriptures, we may ſee, how they ultimately reſolve themſelves into Chriſt. The ſcripture hiſtory is a relation of what went before Chriſt, and made way for his coming. The chronological part of the ſcriptures ſerve to inform us, how much time was elapſed, or run out, before the incarnation of Chriſt, and what the diſtinct ſeaſon of time was, that commenced,

menced, when the Son of God appeared in the fleſh. All the legal ceremonies, and Levitical ſacrifices were types of Chriſt. The ceremonies were a ſcreen, through which Chriſt was to be ſeen, and the ſmoke of the ſacrifices palpably decyphered, and repreſented his blood and ſufferings. The whole Levitical ſervice was a ſhadow of things to come; and the body to which the ſhadow pointed, was Chriſt. The genealogies, which are ſet down in the ſcriptures, were purpoſely recorded, to inform us of what tribe Chriſt came. All the ſcripture prophecies have a ſpecial reference to Chriſt. The prophecies of the Old Teſtament, which were predictions of him, before he came into the world, were accompliſhed in him: All the prophecies of the New Teſtament, which are concerning things to come, as they acquaint us, if we could underſtand them, with what Chriſt will do in the world, and what ſhall be done for him; ſo one day they ſhall all be fulfilled. The precepts of the moral law were written over in his life, with the greateſt accuracy, and in the moſt legible characters. The life of Chriſt was a tranſcript of the moral law of God, in the utmoſt perfection of it. We ſhould not need the law of God, to direct us in our obedience, if we fully knew the hiſ-

tory of Chriſt's life in all the paſſages of it, and could keep in memory the whole account of it. The promiſes of God are all made good in Chriſt: 1 Cor. i. 20. *In him all the promiſes of God are yea, and in him Amen.* In him all the promiſes of God are yea, or they are true; in him they are Amen, or they are confirmed, and ratified, by the ſeal of his blood and death. There is not any conſiderable part or paſſage of God's word, but either immediately, or mediately, either directly, or indirectly, either primarily, or ultimately, refers to Chriſt, and leads us to him. Chriſt is a contraction of the whole ſcriptures, and ſuch things as are ſcattered up and down in the word of God, are brought together in him, and preſented to us at once. Does not this render the ſtudy and meditation of Chriſt uſeful and delightful?

4. It will be heaven to ſee and enjoy Chriſt. What will be the manner or way of the beatifick viſion, which we ſhall have of God in heaven, is difficult for us, at preſent, to apprehend. We may conceive it to be as full of delight as we can, and we are not able to reach ſo high as the thing itſelf, much leſs can we go beyond it; but we muſt not be raſh or precipitate in determining the method of it. Men that have had ſublimated thoughts

about it are not agreed, but vary from one another, in their opinions. I think, they that expreſs themſelves with the greateſt modeſty and humility herein, chooſe the ſafeſt ſide, and take the ſureſt ſteps. Some ſay, the glorified ſaints will ſee the eſſence of God; others ſay, they will not ſee it immediately, or in itſelf, when they ſtand before it in heaven: The reaſon they give is this, no creature can ſee what is infinite; therefore, ſay they, glorified ſaints cannot have a direct viſion of the eſſence of God, but muſt have ſome medium to ſee it by. Whether the firſt or ſecond opinion have the greateſt probability of truth, I ſhall not poſitively aver, but leave it to our experience to decide, when we get to heaven. We cannot now, with any full aſſurance, tell how God will be ſeen in heaven: but this may be ſaid, it is in Chriſt that God will give glorified ſaints a full ſight and enjoyment of himſelf. If this be not the ſole way of ſeeing and enjoying God in heaven, it will be one principal way of the viſion and fruition of him, which is there. It was with the expectation of this, that *David* comforted himſelf; Pſ. xvii. 25. *As for me, I ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs,* *David* ſpoke here of the ſight he was to have of Chriſt, or of God in Chriſt, after the

the reſurrection. As death is frequently, in the ſcripture, compared to a ſleep, ſo the Pſalmiſt call'd the reſurrection, which he hoped for, his awaking out of this ſleep: *I ſhall be ſatisfied* (ſaid he) *when I awake.* By ſatisfaction, he meant the ſupreme felicity of the heavenly ſtate; where there will be no want or emptineſs; but where all deſires will be ſo fill'd, as to raiſe the higheſt delight. What was it the royal prophet expected this fulneſs of happineſs from, after the reſurrection? It was a ſight of God's likeneſs, or image, this was Jeſus Chriſt, in whom the ſaints in heaven will have as full a viſion, as may be, of the glory of God. The Pſalmiſt did not ſay, I ſhall be ſatisfied with the ſight of thee, but, *I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy likeneſs.* It is as if he had ſaid; I comfort myſelf with this belief, that when I riſe again, I ſhall ſee thy image, in thy ſon, which will diſcover to me, as much of thy glory, as can be ſeen by a creature, and herewith I ſhall be ſatisfied for ever.

If it will be heaven to ſee and enjoy Chriſt, how then can we do better, than chooſe and fix upon him, as the chief object of our ſtudy and meditation? If contemplating the glories of Chriſt will be one part of the bleſſedneſs of the country of viſion, ſurely meditating on him muſt be our

our nobleſt employment, whilſt we are in this country of diſtance and ſeparation. If our contemplations dwell much on Chriſt here below, we may juſtly hope that we ſhall, one day, ſee him as he is, in that land of reſt and pure delight, which is above.

Now to the great God our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who, when he was rich, for our ſakes became poor, that we thro' his poverty might be made rich; who aſſumed our nature, and was ſlain, that he might redeem us from ſin by his blood, be aſcribed power, and might, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing, henceforth, and for evermore, Amen.

FINIS.

BOOKS written by the late Reverend Mr. Richard Taylor, *printed for* John Clark *and* Richard Hett.

I. Diſcourſes on ſeveral Subjects, with a Sermon on Mr. *Taylor*'s Death, by the Reverend Mr. *John Nesbitt*, in 2 vol. 8vo. 1719.

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II. Diſcourſes on the Fall of Man, and the Covenant of Grace, 8vo. 1725.

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